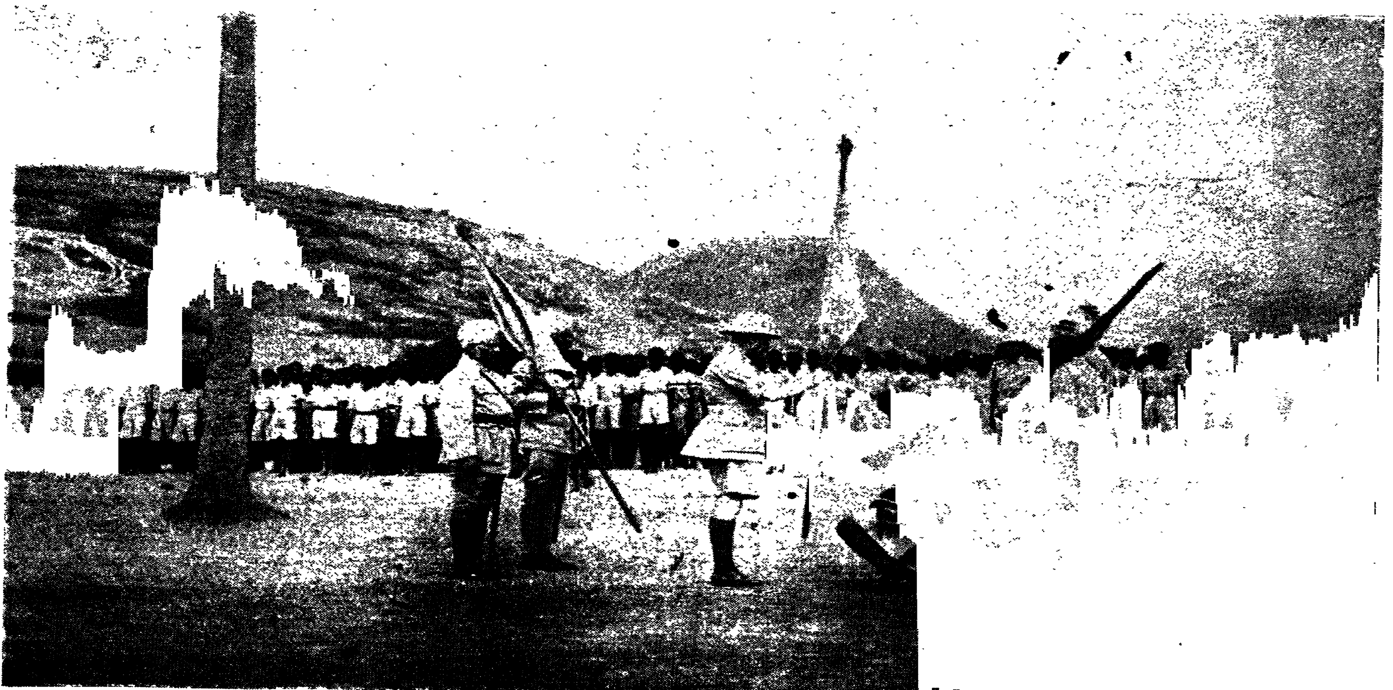


Assaye Day, 23rd September 1942

Lt.-Col. E. G. Phythian-Adams presenting the Colours of the late 10/3rd Madras Regiment (86th C.I.) tc the new 3rd Madras Regimental Centre

ERRATA.

Page 5, *line* 9.—*Delete* (I).

Page 7, *line* 6.—*For* " department " *read* "detachment ".

Page 11, *penultimate line.*—*Omit* " of ".

Page 27, *line* 7.—*For* " were " *read* " well ".

Page 30, *ninth line from bottom.*—*For* " 1705 " *read* " 1795 ".

Page 42, *last paragraph.*—*Delete* fourth line from bottom and *substitute* " Court, and who warned him as to the opposition he was ".

Page 56, *second line from bottom.*—*For* " forces " *read* " forts ".

Page 57, *line* 5.—*For* " commended " *read* " commenced ".

Page 94, *sixth line from bottom.*—*For* " tramendous " *read* " tremendous ".

Page 103, *first line.*—*For* " at " *read* " as ".

Page 133, *first paragraph, fourth line from end,* " *that that* ".—*Delete* one " that ".

The entrances of the elder world were
wide and sure and brought immortal fruit.

II ESDRAS 7.13.

Madras Infantry

1748–1943

By

LT.-COL. E. G. PHYTHIAN-ADAMS

Late 3rd Madras Regiment and
Civil Liaison Officer
Madras Area

With a Foreword by

THE HON. SIR ARTHUR HOPE

G.C.I.E., M.C.

Governor of Madras

Published in 1943
Also translated into Tamil,
Tėlugu and Malayalam

FOREWORD

It gives me the greatest pleasure to write a foreword to Lieutenant-Colonel Phythian-Adams' excellent history of the Madras Infantry,—a history which rescues these regiments from the undeserved neglect which they have suffered at the hands of historians.

The exploits of the Madras Sappers and Miners are known to military historians the world over, but it is not always realized that the corps was developed from the ordinary Madras Infantry regiments whose story is so ably told in this book.

It is a story which goes back nearly 200 years. Starting from a nucleus of local levies, such as those led by Clive, fifty-two Infantry regiments and one Rifle Regiment of Madras Infantry were raised between 1758 and 1826. They served in the wars against the French in the Carnatic, and in all the four Mysore Wars which marked successive stages in the long forty years struggle against Haidar Ali and his son Tipu Sultan of Mysore. In the second of these wars they were commanded by Sir Eyre Coote; in the fourth, in which Colonel Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) was one of the subordinate commanders, they took part in the storming of Seringapatam in 1799. General Wellesley (as he had then become)

chose them for service in the First Mahratta War in which they played a great part at the Battle of Assaye in 1803. They saw jungle fighting, now of such topical interest, in the First and Second Burmese Wars, stood firm and did much to turn the tide in the dark days of the Bengal Mutiny of 1857, and went to Burma again for the Third Burmese War. In the Great War their now depleted ranks were reinforced by eight temporary battalions, and they saw service in Mesopotamia and East Africa and on the frontier. In the present war large forces of Madras Infantry have been raised. Indeed at the present time the Madras Presidency holds the proud distinction of contributing more recruits to the armed forces than any other Province or State in India.

During this long period various regiments of the Madras Infantry have earned the appreciation of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, received the thanks of Parliament, and been commended by the Secretary of State, the Viceroy, and the Commander-in-Chief, besides being mentioned on many occasions by the Madras Government. By 1919 they had been awarded no fewer than twenty-eight battle honours.

Such in brief outline is the inspiring story which Lieutenant-Colonel Phythian-Adams has told with such skill. Its inspiration derives from the innumerable instances of fidelity and courage which occur in it.

The Madras infantryman could be relied upon to hold out to the last against desperate odds, as in Baillie's defeat at Perambakkam in 1780, to fight with dash and daring at the Battle of Assaye in 1803, and to cope undismayed with all the strangeness of jungle warfare in Burma. These splendid services were rendered under hard conditions, with pay several years in arrears, and supply frequently wanting and generally precarious.

Thus the newly raised Madras Infantry regiments have great traditions behind them. I have no doubt that, given proper leadership, they will once again demonstrate the great qualities of their forebears, and prove themselves the equals of any fighting men anywhere.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
GUINDY,
13*th October* 1943.

ARTHUR HOPE,
Governor of Madras.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I have to express my grateful thanks to His Excellency the Hon'ble Sir Arthur Hope, G.C.I.E., M.C., Governor of Fort St. George and its Dependencies, for so kindly consenting to write a Foreword. His unfailing interest in all that concerns Madras Units and his strenuous advocacy of the Madrassi as a soldier have been an inspiration to all in Southern India.

The Madras Artillery, the Madras European Regiment, and the corps of Q.V.O. Madras Sappers and Miners, all have their own annalists. Colonel Wilson's History of the Madras Army covers all branches of the service but concludes with the First Burma War in 1826. No separate record exists of the Madras Infantry, and the present time, when the 3rd Madras Regiment has been re-formed and so many thousands of Madrassis are flocking to the colours, appears a particularly appropriate one for publishing an account of their services from the earliest times down to the present day. The three Madras Pioneer battalions who throughout their existence contributed so largely to the honourable record of the old Coast Army are perforce included, since they were first formed as Infantry battalions and converted into Pioneers at

a comparatively recent date; to exclude them would be anomalous.

This short account has been compiled from Colonel Wilson's History of the Madras Army, from official records, from Regimental Histories and digests of services, and from contemporary accounts of the various campaigns.

Place names have in most cases been spelt in accordance with the practice in vogue in earlier times.

Though primarily intended for the use of officers and men of the rapidly expanding 3rd Madras Regiment, it is hoped that this record of what the Madras soldier has accomplished in the past may prove of interest to the many other formations with which Madrassis are now serving.

I am particularly indebted to Lieutenant-Colonel H. F. Murland for his kind permission to make full use of his *Baillie-Ki-Paltan*, which has proved a mine of helpful information.

My best thanks are due to my friends Professor E. E. Speight for so kindly reading the proofs and for his helpful advice and criticism, and the Reverend Edmund Bull, for valuable assistance on historical points.

BANGALORE, E. G. PHYTHIAN-ADAMS,
28*th September* 1943. *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

MADRAS INFANTRY, 1748—1943

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS

The town of Madras was founded in 1639 and the first Fort St. George in 1644, but the Military History of the Presidency does not commence till more than a century later. During the first hundred years of its existence the Company, recognizing that war was bad for trade, endeavoured to avoid fighting whenever possible, and maintained the minimum of armed force necessary for local protection. Thus it happened that when war broke out between England and France in 1744 the Company found themselves unsupplied with adequate means of defence, and the town of Madras fell an easy prey to the French Forces in 1746, in the absence of any help from the Nawab of Arcot. The Government of the Coromandel Coast thus devolved on the Governor and Council of Fort St. David at Cuddalore, who immediately began to raise troops, and the movement then commenced has continued with varying fluctuations to the present time.

The first sepoy levies had no discipline and were armed with matchlocks, bows and arrows, spears, swords or any other weapons they could get. They consisted of bodies of various strength, each under the command of its own chief, who received from Government the pay of the whole body and distributed it to the men. As time went on some improvement took place in discipline, while the best Indian officers were appointed as Commandants. Muskets were issued in place of matchlocks and the men acquired some idea of drill. As the result of careful selection of the officers

under whom they were placed and constant service in the field in association with European troops, they rapidly improved and soon showed their worth in action under Major Stringer Lawrence, who has recorded his high opinion of their services. Incidentally it may be noted that the French Government at Pondicherry had raised some 5,000 sepoy troops as far back as 1739 to meet a threatened attack by the Mahrattas, and many of these were at a later date incorporated in the Madras Army.

In 1756 the Nawab of Bengal took Calcutta and the Madras Government sent every man they could spare under Clive to re-establish the Company's affairs in Bengal, in spite of the fact that the renewal of war between England and France was imminent and a large French force was daily expected on the coast of Coromandel. The expected event materialized in 1758 and the Madras Government found themselves in a position of extreme danger. They could not meet the enemy in the field, Fort St. David was captured, and the French advanced to besiege Madras. This seems to have opened the eyes of the Madras Government to the need for increasing their sepoy forces and to the advantage of giving them better discipline. In August 1758 they were formed into regular companies of 100 men each with a due proportion of Indian Officers, Havildars, Naiks, etc., and in January of the following year it was decided to form these companies into five battalions with a European Subaltern to each and a Captain to command the whole. Other battalions were raised during the next six years, till in 1765 the establishment was fixed at ten, and by 1767 increased to sixteen battalions. Some battalions were known as Carnatic and some as Circar, according to whether they were raised in the Tamil or Telugu country, but this distinction was

abolished in 1784 when all received the general denomination of Madras battalions. Their establishment was 1,000 in 10 companies of which 2 were Grenadiers, and these latter were often taken away before an action to form a special corps of storm troops. Single battalion regiments were the rule down to 1796, when they were grouped in pairs, but this system was in force only till 1824, when the original procedure was resumed and continued till 1922. Four regiments were converted to Lt. Infantry in 1812, and three into Pioneers at a later date. Force of circumstances and numerous campaigns necessitated the expansion of the Madras Army from time to time, till in 1826 it numbered 52 Battalions of Infantry, in addition to eight Regiments of Cavalry, Corps of Artillery and Pioneers, and three Battalions of European Infantry. This establishment, with some extra and local battalions, was maintained till 1862, when reductions began, no less than 12 being disbanded in that and the two succeeding years. Eight more battalions were struck off in 1882 and between 1890 and 1892 seven more were converted into Burma battalions (Punjabis and Gurkhas).

In 1903 the Presidency Armies were merged into one Indian Army and the whole re-numbered, the Madras regiments having 60 added to their original numbers; thus the 1st M.I. became the 61st Pioneers and so on. At the same time opportunity was taken to reconstitute a number of regiments into Punjabis (including Burma battalions previously converted) which were renumbered 62nd, 66th, 67th, 69th, 72nd, 74th, 76th, 82nd, 84th, 87th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd and 93rd. These battalions which took over the battle honours and devices of their Madras predecessors are now represented in the Indian Army by the 1st, 2nd and 8th Punjab regiments.

The remaining Madras Regiments were renumbered as 61st, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 71st, 73rd, 75th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 83rd, 86th and 88th but four of these (65th C.L.I., 71st Coorgs and 77th and 78th Moplah Rifles) disappeared not long after, and at the outbreak of War in 1914 all that remained of the old Madras Army were the corps of Sappers and Miners, three battalions of Pioneers and eight Carnatic battalions, the last being on a reduced establishment of 600. During the War these were augmented by 8 newly raised battalions, and so satisfactory were Madras troops found that in 1920 it was proposed to retain in the Post-War army not only the three Pioneer and eight Carnatic battalions, but also two of the extra battalions to form two Infantry groups of five each. Finality appears to have been reached with the formation of the 1/3rd Madras Regiment comprising 73rd, 75th, 79th, 83rd and 86th C.I. in 1922, but on grounds of economy the axe was again applied, and battalion after battalion disappeared till in 1928 the last of the Infantry battalions (1/3rd Madras Regiment, formerly 73rd C.I.), which has just rendered good service on the N.W. Frontier, followed the others into oblivion. The three remaining Pioneer battalions with their splendid record followed the same dreary road in 1933, and on the outbreak of War in 1939 all that remained of the Old Coast Army was the famous corps of Q.V.O. Madras Sappers and Miners, a battery of Indian Artillery, and four Territorial battalions, which had been formed in 1921–22.

But the urgent need for fresh troops and the never-failing willingness of the Madrassi to enlist soon caused a reversal of the current. In 1942 the four Territorial battalions were converted into Regulars, and many new battalions of Infantry and Pioneers were raised, so that by the beginning of 1943 the

number of Madrassis serving with all branches of the Armed forces in and out of India exceeded many fold the establishment of the old Coast Army even at its maximum. For obvious reasons full details cannot be given in time of war, and it must suffice here to say that in raising some of the new battalions, owing to an absence of any nucleus on which to build, it became necessary to form a special cadre battalion for the intensive training of prospective Viceroy's Commissioned (I.) Officers and N.C.Os., while large batches of recruits to form the rank and file were sent to every Training Centre in India, where during their six months' training they won the highest commendation from Commanding officers who previously had never seen a Madrassi nor heard anything good about them. When hostilities cease and the full story is told, the Madras Presidency will have every reason to be proud of its magnificent war effort, undeterred by so many past disappointments, which have been bitterly resented.

CHAPTER II

War Services

1751—54

In accordance with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Madras was restored to the English in 1749, but hostilities were soon renewed for the control of the Carnatic, the French Company supporting Chanda Sahib and the English their nominee Mahomed Ali. This minor and unofficial war lasted from 1751 to 1754 and the principal events were the famous defence of Arcot by Clive from September 25th to November 14th, 1751, and numerous engagements round Trichinopoly. Orme,

quoting Dalton, mentions the sepoys as having been very forward in the action near Volcondah on May 29th, 1752, between Clive and Monsieur D'Auteuil :—

"Soon after, the sepoys who formed the van of the English column appeared, outmarching the Europeans at a great rate. Eight hundred of them had in the enemy's service made a resolute attempt to storm the breaches at the assault on Arcot, and having since that time been employed in the English service in several actions under the command of Capt. Clive, entertained no small opinion of their own prowess when supported by a body of Europeans. These men no sooner came within cannon shot of the enemy than they ran precipitately to attack them without regarding any order. They received the fire of the enemy's cannon and musketry which killed many of them, but did not check the rest from rushing on to the push of the bayonet."

Dalton, who defeated the French at Utatur on May 3rd, 1752, wrote the next day to Clive : "Your Nellore sepoys are glorious fellows and their Subadar as good a man as ever breathed. He is my sole dependance." The Subadar mentioned is the famous Yusuf Khan, who was afterwards driven into rebellion against the English by intrigue and lost his life at Madura—he was usually known as the Nellore Subadar. Finally a suspension of arms took place in October 1754, followed by a treaty between the rival companies, which secured Nawab Mahomed Ali in the possession of the Carnatic.

1755—57

Between 1755 and 1757 the Company's troops were engaged in support of the Nawab in the Madura and Tinnevelly districts when Haidar Ali of Mysore, intervening on

behalf of the opposing party, was completely defeated by Subadar Yusuf Khan, Commandant of the English sepoys, when on the march from Trichinopoly to Madura. In 1756, as already stated, the Madras Government sent every available man under Clive to Bengal to retrieve the situation there. This department amounted to 887 Europeans and 1,100 sepoys, who were afterwards incorporated into the Bengal Army. On June 23rd, 1757, was fought the battle of Plassey which, however remarkable for the moral courage shown by Clive in giving it, and the great results which followed, cannot be considered an important battle in a military sense, since there was no manœuvring and very little fighting; no detail of the action is therefore given here.

1757—61

War having again been declared in Europe, the French under Lally, who had received large reinforcements, quickly captured Fort St. David and opened the siege of Madras on December 17th, 1758, but owing to scarcity of supplies and the operations of small bodies of troops (among whom the Nellore Subadar was conspicuous) on his lines of communication, they were obliged to raise the siege two months later. It was during the defence of Madras that the Sepoy Companies were first formed into battalions, and the 1st and 2nd Battalions Madras Infantry, numbering 2,213 men, took part in the defence. They did good service both as Pioneers and as Infantry, and suffered a fair proportion of casualties—105 killed and 217 wounded.

Madras sepoys also did well at the defence of the Pagoda at Conjeeveram in June 1757, where two companies under

Sergt. Lambertson beat off a French detachment composed of 200 Europeans, 500 sepoys and 2 field guns.

Meanwhile Col. Forde by a brilliant feat of arms had captured Masulipatam from a superior French force, and on October 27th, 1759, Col. Coote arrived to command the troops in the Carnatic. His energy and skill quickly restored the situation, and on January 22nd, 1760, he inflicted a crushing defeat on the French at Wandiwash, an action which has justly been described as one of the decisive battles of India, the French losing 400 Europeans killed, several hundred prisoners and 23 guns. Most of the fighting was done by the European troops, and Orme records that after the action the Commandants of sepoys, complimenting Col. Coote on his victory, thanked him for the sight of such a battle as they had never seen. Coote then proceeded to capture various forts in possession of the French, and finally Pondicherry itself surrendered on January 15th, 1761. But though the sepoys took little part in the battle of Wandiwash they distinguished themselves on several other occasions; for example in the action near Devicottah in February 1760, where two companies under Sergt. Somers defeated two companies of French Sepoys, taking four officers and the colours; at the assault of Permacoil; at Villanoor near Pondicherry in July, where a sudden attack by two companies led to the surrender of the fort; and in September at the redoubt in the bound hedge of Pondicherry, which was held by three companies against a French counter-attack of 400 Europeans with two field guns.

War with Spain having been declared in 1762, an expedition left Madras on August 1st and the town of Manila was stormed on October 6th with little loss. This force

included 650 Madras sepoys, drawn presumably as volunteers from different battalions. Peace having been declared between England, France and Spain, the Philippine Islands were restored in 1764 and the French Settlements in 1765.

1763

In 1763 the Nellore Subadar Yusuf Khan, whose previous distinguished services have been recorded and who had been appointed as renter of the Nawab* for the Madura and Tinnevelly districts, hoisted the French Colours, being driven into rebellion by intrigue. A considerable force was despatched to deal with the rebellion, but two attempts to storm Madura failed, and only after a blockade and as the result of treason among the Subadar's French troops was the place surrendered and Yusuf Khan hanged.

From the end of 1764 up to June 1767 detachments were employed against the Poligar Chiefs of the Central and Southern Carnatic, and a good deal of desultory fighting ensued, in which the sepoys took their full share. Col. Campbell reporting to Government on January 19th, 1765, says :—" The sepoys behaved gallantly indeed and pushed through the thick woods, which at other times they would have found almost impossible." In July of the same year Lt.-Col. Wood also brought to the notice of Government the spirited behaviour of the 5th M.I. at the capture of certain stockades near Trichinopoly, and he mentions the Sepoy Commandant, Moideen Sahib, as having distinguished himself greatly.

1767—69

On August 25th, 1767, Haidar Ali invaded the Carnatic in alliance with the Nizam and thus commenced the first of

the four Mysore Wars which were to strain the English Company's resources to the limit and to see them suffer some severe reverses before the storming of Seringapatam on May 4th, 1799, removed the menace which had confronted them for 32 years. The allied force was a strong one and totalled 42,000 Cavalry, 28,000 Infantry and 109 guns, to match which Col. Smith had 30 European Cavalry, 800 European Infantry, 5,000 sepoys and 16 guns. He was subsequently reinforced by Col. Wood's detachment of 500 European Infantry, three incomplete sepoy battalions and eight guns. Col. Smith endeavoured to strengthen the frontier by taking possession of certain places in the Baramahal, but an attempt on the virgin fortress of Krishnagiri was repulsed, nearly the whole of the European Grenadiers being killed by rocks hurled down by the defenders. In his report to Government Col. Smith stated that the Sepoy Grenadiers of the 2nd Battalion behaved with remarkable spirit and firmness. On August 30th, Col. Smith marched for Tiruvannamalai to meet Col. Wood's detachment and to secure provisions, but the enemy followed immediately, hoping to bring Smith to action before the junction could be effected, and came up with him near Chengam (North Arcot district) on September 2nd. A battle ensued in which the allies were defeated with considerable loss, but Col. Smith being without provisions was obliged to resume his march. Col. Wood joined him and on September 26th a second action was fought near Tiruvannamalai, which resulted in the complete defeat of the enemy with the loss of 64 guns. As these battles were the first general actions in which Madras sepoys took part after having been trained to manœuvre in battalions, they are worthy of special notice, and a full account of both actions will be found in Chapter III.

Col. Smith was then compelled to disperse his army for subsistence, and Haidar seized the opportunity to attack Ambur Fort, which was gallantly defended by the 10th M.I. under Capt. Calvert, till relieved by Col. Smith's renewed advance. A rising in Malabar and operations of the Bengal Army towards Hyderabad now caused the allied armies to separate, their withdrawal being covered by active operations on Col. Smith's convoys. One of these was attacked by Haidar in person at Singarapet on December 29th, 1767, but he was repulsed with loss by the escort, the 5th Battalion of Sepoys (4th M.I.) being specially noticed for repelling the Mysore cavalry.

In 1768 the British army advanced and captured Krishnagiri, Hosur and Kolar, and Col. Smith proposed to move on Bangalore and Seringapatam, but the presence in his camp of two members of the Madras Council impeded his operations and Haidar was given time to save Bangalore. He made overtures for peace, but these were rejected by the Madras Government and the War was resumed. Col. Wood's detachment narrowly escaped disaster at Mulbagal and Bagalur, and Haidar then countermarched and entered Coimbatore, overwhelming Capt. Nixon's detachment and capturing Erode. A considerable amount of manœuvring ensued and Haidar, who was hard pressed and feared that he might be forced to fight a general action with disastrous consequences, resolved on a bold stroke. On March 29th, 1769, he suddenly appeared before the gates of Madras with 6,000 horse, having marched 130 miles in three and a half days, and dictated peace practically on his own terms, one of these being of mutual assistance in case of attack. The agreement signed was by no means of disadvantageous to the British, since it included mutual restoration of prisoners and

places. Haidar had shown remarkable military skill on many occasions in this campaign, but Col. Smith also deserves the fullest praise, handicapped as he was by greatly inferior forces, but above all by a total lack of cavalry against an enemy force largely composed of that arm, and by the repeated interference of the Madras Council with his military operations. In this war for the first time two short brass three pr. guns were attached to each sepoy battalion.

1771—77

In 1771 a force was assembled to impose certain terms on the Rajah of Tanjore, who had contributed nothing to the expenses of the recent war with Haidar. The fort of Vallam was captured and on September 22nd the army came before Tanjore. On October 1st the enemy made a very determined sortie, which was eventually repulsed with loss. On October 27th a practicable breach was effected and preparations were made for an assault, when the Rajah agreed to surrender. Tanjore was again captured, this time with little loss, on September 17th, 1773, the assault having been made unexpectedly about noon.

Fighting also took place against the Marawars of Ramnad and the Poligars of Madura and Tinnevelly in 1772, and in the Northern Circars at Kimedy in 1773–4, and again in Jeypore in 1775.

Early in 1775 two companies of European Infantry and the 9th Carnatic Battalion were ordered on service to Bombay, and this detachment saw considerable service in Guzarat, and was later complimented by the Bombay Government. In recognition of their readiness to proceed on foreign service the 9th Battalion was permitted to bear on its colours and

appointments the motto *Khooskee Wa Turree* (by land and sea), which is still borne by its lineal descendant the 2/2nd Punjab Regiment.

In August 1777 a field force of two Sepoy battalions with a detachment of artillery assembled at Sholinghur (North Arcot district) for service against the refractory Poligars in the hills near Chittoor. The natural difficulties of the country being great, the service was harassing, but was successfully accomplished in a few months.

1778—80

During June 1778 Government, in anticipation of the declaration in Europe of War with France, made preparations to attack Pondicherry and the other French Settlements, and a strong force including the 2nd, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 16th, 17th and 20th M.I. was assembled for the purpose. Yanam (East Godavari district) was taken on July 31st and Karikal (Tanjore district) surrendered on August 11th. Batteries were opened against Pondicherry on September 18th and the place capitulated on October 17th after an obstinate defence, during which the British lost 49 Europeans killed and 122 wounded, while 153 sepoys were killed and 496 wounded. The French losses amounted to considerably less, viz., 136 killed and 332 wounded.

Early in 1779 a force including the 3rd, 4th and 19th M.I. was sent against Mahé (Malabar) a few miles south of the English Fort at Tellicherry, and the place surrendered in March. The Sepoy Battalions received the thanks of Government for their zeal and good conduct on this occasion.

In February 1780 a detachment of artillery, one battalion of European Infantry and the 8th Carnatic Battalion of

Sepoys (8th M.I.) embarked for Surat and joined General Goddard's force for operations against the Mahrattas.

On May 5th of the same year a body of Nairs estimated at 1,000 made a surprise dawn attack on the detachment at Tellicherry. Some of them effected an entrance into the fort but after a sharp struggle they were repulsed with the loss of 217 men killed and wounded. For over a year the Madras troops were detained at Tellicherry (which was then within the Presidency of Bombay) and throughout that time there was continuous fighting not only against the Nairs but also against a force which Haidar Ali, annoyed at the loss of Mahé, through which port he received his supplies of arms and munitions, had sent against the English settlement. Finally the 19th M.I. which formed the garrison was relieved by Bombay troops and returned by sea to Cuddalore.

1780—84

When in 1779 the British began to operate against the French Settlements, they were warned by Haidar Ali that if they attacked Mahé he would retaliate on the Carnatic, and accordingly, he assisted the French, though without effect, in the defence of Mahé. In the 11 years which had elapsed since the close of the 1st Mysore War, Haidar had greatly extended his domains, which now stretched from Dharwar in the north to Dindigul in the south, while the sea coast from Honawar to Cochin formed his boundary on the west and Cuddapah, Chittoor and the Baramahal his limits on the east. From the immense treasure, estimated at 12 millions sterling, which he had captured at Bednore in 1763, he had raised and equipped a large force, part of which had been trained in the European manner and was commanded by French officers; he also had the assistance of 600 French

troops under Col. Lally, who had joined him in 1778. Annoyed at the loss of Mahé, and in pursuance of his threat Haidar Ali decided to ally himself with the Mahrattas and the Nizam and to drive the British out of India.

Early in 1780 he assembled his army, amounting to 28,000 cavalry, 62,000 Infantry and 100 guns, at Chengam (North Arcot district) and on July 20th he invaded the Carnatic, devastating it far and wide to the confines of Madras itself. To meet this grave emergency the Madras Government, at last awake to their danger, could dispose of only a pitifully small force already weakened by the detachment to Surat and the garrisons of various forts. Col. Braithwaite was recalled from Pondicherry to Madras with one European Battalion and the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th Battalions of Sepoys, while Col. Baillie was instructed to march south from Ellore with a detachment of Artillery and European Infantry, the 1st, 7th and 11th M.I., and one unrepresented Circar Battalion; his force numbered in all about 200 Europeans and 2,600 sepoys.

On August 24th Col. Baillie reached a place within 28 miles of Munro's camp at St. Thomas Mount, and the junction of the two forces could easily have been effected on the 25th. The Commander-in-Chief, however, ordered Baillie to march on Conjeevaram, where the army from Madras, only some 5,000 strong, arrived on the 29th. The route so unfortunately laid down for Baillie brought him into dangerous proximity with the enemy, and the opportunity was too good to be missed by a skilful general like Haidar, who detached a strong force under Tipu to cut off Baillie, while he himself with the main portion of his army contained Munro. Baillie was delayed by a flooded river till September 4th, and when Tipu appeared on the morning of the 6th

he took up a position near Perambakkam, 14 miles from Munro's camp, losing on that day 100 killed and wounded. On the same evening he wrote to Munro for assistance, while Tipu, who also had lost heavily, sent to ask for reinforcements from Haidar. The latter had on the 6th interposed his army between Munro and Baillie's expected route, but Munro made no move to frustrate his intention, and did nothing on the 6th, 7th or 8th, in spite of the fact that the sound of firing, which showed that Baillie was engaged, was distinctly audible. On the 8th Baillie's letter was received, and the flank companies of the army, only 1,000 men, under Col. Fletcher, were sent to Baillie's assistance. Fletcher by a night march succeeded in eluding Haidar, and joined Baillie on the 9th, thus bringing the latter's force up to 3,700. On the same night they started to march for Conjeevaram, while Haidar, perceiving that Munro intended to remain where he was, quietly moved off in the darkness towards Perambakkam. Baillie had scarcely quitted that place when he encountered the enemy, and after some desultory fighting came to the unaccountable resolution of halting where he was for the night, in spite of Col. Fletcher's protests. He was at this time within nine miles of Munro, and had he only continued to advance must have effected a junction with the main force without much difficulty. At daybreak on September 10th, the march was recommenced, but Haidar's army had now come up and the fate of the detachment was sealed. The unfortunate troops, in the open and exposed to a cross fire of 50 guns, made a brave resistance until their ammunition was exhausted, an event which was hastened by the explosion of two tumbrils, and then formed into a square by their now severely wounded commander, received and repulsed no fewer than 13 different attacks of the enemy horse, but a final desperate effort by the Mysore cavalry broke

the square and the little force was practically annihilated. Meanwhile Munro, discovering in the morning that Haidar had disappeared, marched towards Perambakkam, but after advancing a few miles halted, being uncertain of Baillie's situation. On hearing of the disaster he hastened back to Conjeevaram, and abandoning his heavy guns and stores commenced his retreat next morning to Chingleput, while Haidar, finding that his troops, who had suffered heavy losses, were by no means anxious to attack Munro's army, contented himself with detaching a force to annoy it on the march. Munro reached Chingleput on the 12th losing in the retreat upwards of 500 killed and wounded, mostly sepoys of whom the rearguard was composed. Speaking of these men Innes Munro says :—" Many of Col. Baillie's sepoys fought hard in Gen. Munro's army the next day, which was no small mark of their loyalty and courage."

Baillie's defeat has been treated at some length not only on account of the magnitude of the disaster, but because it was the first of numerous attempts by both Haidar and Tipu to overwhelm detached forces, which became in fact a regular feature of their strategy, though the results were not always attended by the same success.

Thus closed one of the most brief and discreditable campaigns in the British military history. Had Munro acted with more decision, his plan, faulty as it was, might still perhaps have been carried through with success. Possibly he feared to risk the only field force remaining in the Presidency, whose defeat would have involved the fall of Madras. Haidar too missed a golden opportunity in not following up his victory and destroying Munro's force—such an opportunity was never to occur again. It is out of place here to follow the fortunes of the unfortunate prisoners to their dungeons

in Seringapatam, where Baillie was soon to be joined by two other British Generals, but the visitors to that historic fortress should not omit to view the graphic wall painting of Baillie's defeat in the Darya Dowlat Bagh palace.

In November 1780 the Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Eyre Coote, arrived in Madras with reinforcements and took over sole direction of the war. The situation which confronted him on arrival might well have appalled a less resolute man. The small Madras army had not only suffered in morale as the result of Baillie's defeat, but had lost there the picked companies of their battalions. Transport was almost entirely lacking, while all supplies had to be brought by sea, since Haidar had applied the scorched earth policy to a belt of country 30 to 50 miles wide, running from the Pulicat Lake in the north to Pondicherry in the south. Nor was the sea route certain, as a French fleet might at any time appear in superior force and drive off the British squadron. But Coote rose superior to all difficulties and in a few months was prepared to meet Haidar in the field.

At the commencement of 1781 Haidar, who had already captured Arcot, was engaged in the siege of Ambur, Vellore, Wandiwash, Perumukkal and Chingleput, of which Ambur, previously so successfully defended by Capt. Calvert in 1767, capitulated on January 13th.

Meanwhile Sir E. Coote, who had assembled his army, consisting of 1,600 Europeans, 10 Sepoy battalions and 62 guns, marched south and relieved Chingleput and Wandiwash, storming on the way the fort of Karunguli. Wandiwash was relieved on January 24th just in time, as only one day's ammunition remained to the garrison which, though consisting of only two British Officers and two and a half companies,

had, owing to the heroic efforts of Lieut. Flint, maintained a stout defence against Haidar's principal officer Mir Sahib, with a powerful train of artillery, 11,000 foot and 22,000 horse, since August 12th, 1780.

On arrival at Cuddalore on February 8th, Coote found himself in a desperate position, being unable to bring Haidar (who had followed him south) to action, while the enemy's cavalry laid waste all the surrounding country. Had the French fleet properly performed its duty of intercepting supplies by sea, on which the British army entirely depended, the latter must either have capitulated or been dispersed. Fortunately the fleet moved off and Coote was rapidly reprovisioned from Madras. On June 16th he moved southwards to capture the fortified Pagoda at Chidambaram, which Haidar had strengthened as a depot for provisions; but having been greatly misinformed as to the strength and composition of the garrison, the small force which he sent to make the attempt proved unequal to the task. Coote at first decided to renew the attack with a larger force but learning the true situation withdrew without making a further attempt. This repulse decided Haidar to move at once and complete the defeat of the British, whose losses at Chidambaram had been exaggerated. Making a forced march of 100 miles he interposed his army between Coote and Cuddalore, and commenced to fortify a position within three miles of the British camp, while his cavalry covered the whole country round and prevented Coote from obtaining any information as to the enemy's strength and dispositions. At last the opportunity for which the British Commander had waited so patiently had arrived, and requesting Sir E. Hughes to cover Cuddalore with the fleet, he moved forward to try his fortune

in battle, the result of which was to mean triumph or annihilation. On July 1st, 1781, was fought the Battle of Porto Novo, which is described in detail in Chapter III. Suffice it here to say that Haidar was defeated with heavy loss and ordered a general retreat, though unfortunately the victory could not be exploited owing to the want of cavalry and the exhaustion of the army.

After the battle Coote moved towards Madras to cover the arrival of the Bengal detachment, which in the course of its long march had lost from sickness or desertion more than half its original strength of 5,000. What remained however was good material and proved a welcome addition to the field army.

On August 27th Haidar offered battle at Pollilore, close to the scene of Baillie's disaster in the previous year. The result was indecisive, and Haidar withdrew to again offer battle at Sholinghur (North Arcot district) on September 27. The end of a hard day's fighting saw the British victorious and encamped on the field of battle, the high light of the action being the repulse of Haidar's Household Cavalry by the 21st Carnatic Battalion (20th M.I.). A full account of this action is given in Chapter III.

Coote's army as usual was greatly distressed for want of supplies, and he had to send out various detachments to forage. One of these, consisting of a few Europeans and five Sepoy Battalions, was surprised by Haidar's main army near Virakanellur on October 23rd. Although hotly pressed by the enemy on both flanks and rear, the troops fought with undaunted courage, the 20th M.I. again being conspicuous in recovering a gun which had been temporarily abandoned. Finally Haidar gave up the pursuit, greatly mortified at his

failure to destroy such a small force, which he had made certain of being able to annihilate before Coote could come to its rescue.

A lucky discovery of hidden grain now enabled Coote to relieve Vellore, whose garrison had been holding out with the greatest heroism for 16 months, by supplying it with 6 weeks rice, after which, as the north-east monsoon was approaching, he withdrew to Tripasur. Meanwhile Sir Hector Munro with a force of 4,000 men had captured Negapatam and forced Haidar's troops to evacuate that area. Coote had consequently a larger area from which to draw supplies.

On January 2nd, 1782, Coote again relieved Vellore, whose retention was of the utmost importance as a base for future operations. Haidar endeavoured to prevent the operation, but without success, thanks to Coote's skilful manœuvring.

On February 18th a severe reverse was sustained by the British at Annagudi (Tanjore district), the Southern Detachment under Braithwaite being defeated by Tipu and forced to surrender after 26 hours' desperate fighting. Braithwaite's force consisted of 100 Europeans and 1,500 sepoys, while Tipu had Lally's French Corps, 400 strong, 10,000 picked horse and 10,000 infantry. Not long after Haidar received a further reinforcement of French troops.

The position now was that Haidar controlled practically the whole of the Carnatic, with the exception of a few forts, and it was obvious that the only remedy for this desperate state of affairs was to bring Haidar to action. Coote therefore marched in May, but was unable to come up with Haidar till June 2nd at Arni, where as usual Haidar evaded a general action. Finally Coote returned to the Mount on 20th June

and shortly afterwards, his health having broken down, handed over command to Major-Gen. James Stuart and proceeded to Bengal. At the end of the year Haidar died at Narasingarayanpet near Chittoor, and Tipu, who was engaged on the West Coast opposing the Bombay force, hurriedly returned and assumed command of the army.

The passing of this remarkable man deserves notice however brief. Of lowly origin and quite illiterate, Haidar, by sheer force of character, had made himself ruler of Mysore, and by his ability finally dominated almost the whole of South India. A brave soldier and a most skilful general, he was entirely without conscience, but not cruel for the sake of cruelty. "Everything was weighed in the balance of utility, and no grain of human feeling, no breath of virtue or vice, was permitted to incline the beam. If he had affection for anyone it was for his unworthy son, whom he had nominated as his successor, while predicting that he would lose the empire which he himself had gained." (Wilks). Haidar Ali was indeed the finest soldier whom South India has produced.

Early in 1783 Gen. Stuart reprovisioned Vellore, without interruption by Tipu, who was hastily returning to the West Coast on account of the capture of Bednore by Gen. Mathews with the Bombay Army. Stuart then moved to recover Cuddalore from the French, with the co-operation of the fleet, and arrived before that place on June 7th. On the 13th an attack was made on the outer lines of defence, and after very heavy fighting the British succeeded in retaining one redoubt only, but the French withdrew within the walls the same night. The casualties on this day amounted to over 1,000, the good name of the Coast Army being upheld by the

19th M.I. which divided the honours of the day with the 101st Foot.

On June 17th the British fleet was driven off by the French squadron under Admiral Suffrein, who landed 3,600 men to assist Bussy, and on the 25th the latter made a vigorous sortie, which was however repulsed with loss. The position of the British now became critical, their numbers having been diminished by casualties and disease. Fortunately at this juncture intelligence was received of the conclusion of peace in Europe, in consequence of which hostilities ceased on 2nd July 1783.

The war with Tipu however continued and Col. Fullarton, who had carried out some successful operations in the south, now took over command. From Madura and Dindigul he moved on Palghat with a force of 2,000 Europeans, 14 sepoy battalions and 56 guns, and captured that place by storm during a heavy fall of rain. Shortly afterwards Coimbatore surrendered, and Fullarton made preparations to advance via Satyamangalam on Seringapatam, hoping either to attack the capital at a disadvantage during the absence of Tipu before Mangalore, or to force him to raise the siege of that place.

But Tipu, realizing that in the absence of French support he would be unable to contend alone against the British, since Warren Hastings had skilfully detached his other two allies the Nizam and the Mahrattas, decided to make peace, and hostilities thus came to a close.

Throughout these campaigns Sir Eyre Coote's correspondence with Government is full of complaints regarding the scarcity of provisions and the difficulty experienced in obtaining the smallest assistance from the Nawab's officers

throughout the country. The sepoys in addition were kept constantly in arrears of pay for several consecutive years, "notwithstanding which and the extreme severity of the service, they steadfastly resisted, with few exceptions, the numerous offers conveyed by the emissaries of Haidar and Tipu." Such fidelity under similar circumstances is without parallel in the military history of any nation, as Col. Wilson justly remarks.

Innes Munro, who served alongside the Carnatic troops throughout these campaigns, writing in 1789 says about the prisoners in Mysore :—

"Enough cannot be said of the fidelity and generous conduct of the Company's Indian officers and sepoys during the whole series of these unparalleled sufferings. Every cruel mode that could be suggested was adopted by the enemy to force them into their service, but the brave sepoys were satisfied to suffer every hardship and indignity rather than forfeit their allegiance to the Company."

In connection with the shortage of transport Col. Fullarton from his camp at Dindigul reported on February 6th, 1784 :—

"The Native troops have carried their provisions on their backs from Palghat to this place, and have enough remaining to subsist them as far as Madura, being nearly 200 miles. I mention this circumstance as a proof of the willing spirit of your sepoys in this quarter, who have borne all their hardships with alacrity seldom equalled and never surpassed."

1790—92

The 3rd Mysore War was occasioned by Tipu's attack on our ally the Rajah of Travancore in December 1789.

Major-Gen. Medows arrived in Madras as Governor and Commander-in-Chief on February 19th, 1790, and in May proceeded to Trichinopoly to take command of the army which had been assembled there, amounting to some 15,000 men. His intention was to invade Mysore by the pass from Coimbatore, while the force under Col. Maxwell was to advance direct on the Baramahal. There was some delay due to commissariat troubles, but by August the frontier forts had been captured, as well as Dindigul, Coimbatore and Palghat, while a strong detachment under Col. Floyd took Satyamangalam by surprise. On September 11th, Tipu suddenly descended into Coimbatore by the Gazalhatty Pass with about 40,000 men and a large train of artillery, and endeavoured to cut off Floyd. After heavy fighting Floyd succeeded in extricating himself, but with considerable loss, the Sepoy battalions (1st, 5th and 25th M.I.) losing 98 killed and 86 wounded while the 36th Foot had over 100 casualties, and 6 guns were lost. Medows, having reassembled his army, marched on Satyamangalam, but Tipu evaded him and after capturing Erode and Dharapuram withdrew to the Baramahal on learning of Col. Maxwell's advance in that direction. Gen. Medows joined Col. Maxwell on November 17th and immediately after endeavoured to bring the enemy to action, but Tipu eluded the attempt and descending into the Carnatic made for Trichinopoly. After plundering Srirangam he endeavoured to take Thiagur, but was repulsed by Capt. Flint, the former defender of Wandiwash against Haidar; he then captured Tiruvannamalai, where the town and temples were sacked, and finally encamped at the Red Hills near Pondicherry, where he remained several weeks negotiating with the French.

In the meantime Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General, arrived in Madras on December 12th to assume control of

operations and in accordance with his orders Gen. Medows moved to Madras via Arni. Cornwallis, realizing that the only way to bring Tipu to terms was to strike at Seringapatam, concentrated his army at Vellore on February 11th, 1791, and by a rapid march entered Mysore by the Mugali pass before Tipu, who had hastily returned, had time to oppose him. Kolar was taken on February 28th, Hoskote on March 2nd and on 5th the British Army arrived before Bangalore. On the afternoon of the 6th, Col. Floyd was sent with the Cavalry brigade and 5 Sepoy battalions to carry out a reconnaissance. He was lured into an ambush and the cavalry suffered severely till their withdrawal was covered by Major Gowdie's brigade; the loss in horses was particularly serious owing to the difficulty in replacing them. Early on the morning of the 7th the petta was stormed after severe fighting and a practicable breach having been made by the 20th, the fort of Bangalore was assaulted and carried on the night of the 21st.

Meanwhile Tipu had remained in the vicinity with his main Army, but beyond sending in reinforcements made no attempt to interfere with Cornwallis' operations. Probably he was of opinion that the fort, which was a strong one and adequately garrisoned, could hold out indefinitely.

After effecting a junction with the Nizam's cavalry some 10,000 strong, Cornwallis then advanced on Seringapatam by the Kakanhalli road, thus eluding Tipu, who had taken up a strong position on the more direct road near Closepet. An action was fought at Arikere on May 14th and Tipu who had lost heavily withdrew to Seringapatam, but the British army was now suffering great distress from want of supplies, while the transport cattle were dying in hundreds daily from lack of forage and the gun bullocks were so emaciated that they

could no longer drag the guns. A reconnaisance of the fortress showed that nothing could be effected by a coup-de-main and Cornwallis after halting a few days at Kanambadi to cover the withdrawal of the Bombay division to the West Coast, burst his siege guns and started his withdrawal to Bangalore. A few days later junction was effected with our allies the Mahrattas, whose were stocked bazaars relieved all anxiety as regards supplies. Tipu's numerous cavalry had till then prevented all means of communication between the allied forces, so that Cornwallis had no idea of their proximity, but the siege train having been destroyed nothing further could be attempted against Seringapatam till it was replaced, and the withdrawal to Bangalore was therefore resumed.

During the remainder of 1791 the army was employed in reducing numerous hill forts, the most notable of which were Nandydrug and Savandrug. The first of these was carried by storm before daybreak on October 18th and in his General Orders Lord Cornwallis commended the good services of the 3rd, 4th, 10th, 13th and 27th M.I. in these operations. A story is told that just before the assault a whisper went round that the breach was mined. Gen. Medows' quick retort that any mine there must be a mine of gold raised a laugh and dispelled any hesitation which the first ill-timed remark might have occasioned. Savandrug was stormed on December 21st with the loss of only one soldier wounded, the garrison having been seized by a sudden panic. The capture of these reputedly impregnable forts had a considerable effect on the morale of Tipu's troops, while at the same time it ensured the safe passage of the British convoys.

While these operations were taking place Tipu made an attempt at a diversion by attacking Coimbatore, which was

forced to surrender after a gallant defence of twenty-eight days against overwhelming odds, but Cornwallis was not to be diverted from his objective and on January 25th, 1792, he again resumed his advance on Seringapatam, and encamped at French Rocks about six miles north of the fortress.

The fondness of Lord Cornwallis for night operations is notable—Bangalore and Nandydrug were both stormed at night, and the advance from Arikere was also carried out before dawn. So here too the British Commander decided to use the cover of darkness for his assault on Tipu's huge entrenched camp. This was on the north side of the Cauvery river, immediately in front of the island on which the fortress stands, and covered about three miles in length, diminishing from 3,000 yards in breadth at the western extremity to about one mile in the centre, and running nearly to a point at the eastern end where it was flanked by the defences on the Karighat hill. It was enclosed by a wide hedge of prickly pear and strengthened by a number of redoubts, all armed with heavy cannon. Tipu's infantry, computed at 40,000 with 100 field guns was drawn up behind the line of redoubts with about 5,000 cavalry in the rear. The guns in the fort and other parts of the island which could be brought to bear on the north side were estimated at 300.

The attack was made in three divisions, and as was to be expected resulted in some confusion and much hand to hand fighting. One column lost its way in the dark and Lord Cornwallis himself was temporarily isolated with a small party. The enemy made repeated counter-attacks but all were repulsed, and dawn found the British not only in command of the greater part of the fortified camp but also well established across the river on the island itself and facing the petta of Ganjam. During the next day the enemy

continued his counter-attacks in that part of the camp which was still in his possession, covered by the fire of the guns from the fort, but by 4 p.m. his forces gave up the attempt and retreated to the island. By evening the petta had been cleared and the British troops on the island had consolidated their position.

Tipu now made overtures for peace, but as nothing definite was proposed, preparations for the siege were commenced. Gen. Abercromby with the Bombay division arrived on the 16th and on the 19th crossed the river and took up a position south-west of the fort. The plans which the Bombay Engineers then prepared proved of the greatest value at the final siege in 1799. On the 22nd Tipu made an attempt to dislodge Abercromby but failed, and seeing that further resistance was useless accepted the terms offered. By the treaty thus concluded Tipu agreed to cede half his dominions to the Allies and to pay an indemnity of three crores and thirty lakhs of rupees; pending settlement he surrendered two of his sons as hostages.

Thus concluded the 3rd Mysore War which, though it started badly for the British, ended most favourably for them and their allies. Cornwallis, like Smith in 1767 and Fullarton in 1783, realized that Seringapatam was the key to success, and once he had decided on his objective he refused to be diverted from it. Tipu on the other hand missed a great opportunity of overwhelming either the Bombay Division or Lord Cornwallis' army itself when want of supplies compelled the latter to withdraw from Seringapatam in 1791.

Madras battalions which took part in this campaigns were the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 19th, 20th, 21st and 22nd M.I. receiving later the battle honour *Mysore*. Lineal descendants of these now are the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th Battalions of the 3rd Madras Regiment.

1793—96

War having been declared by the National Convention of France against England and Holland on February 1st, 1793, a well-equipped force including twelve sepoy battalions was assembled in July for the capture of Pondicherry. No opposition was expected, as the garrison was known to number only 500 Europeans and 900 sepoys, but as the French refused to surrender siege operations were commenced on August 10th; fire opened on the 20th and the place capitulated on the 22nd. Our loss was small, amounting only to 248. The colours of the 12th M.I., which had been taken at the surrender of Cuddalore in 1782, were recovered on this occasion.

About the end of April preparations were commenced for an expedition against the French Island of Mauritius and volunteers were called for to make up three sepoy battalions. Great alacrity was shown in responding to the call, the 19th M.I. and some other battalions coming forward in a body. Eventually the expedition was abandoned in consequence of intelligence from England.

Minor operations took place in 1794–95 against the southern Poligars and in the Northern Circars, but the next major operation was the expedition to Ceylon in 1705, consequent on war having broken out with Holland. The force employed included the 1st, 7th, 9th, 23rd and 35th M.I. Operations commenced with the siege of Trincomalee, which surrendered after little resistance on August 26th. Other places were captured in rapid succession and by early 1796 the whole island had been occupied.

Another expedition sailed against the Dutch Indies at the same time, and Malacca surrendered on August 18th. It had

been intended that a force to attack Amboyna should be supplied from Bengal, but as the Bengal sepoys refused to embark and Government did not consider it expedient to resort to force, the expedition was composed exclusively of Madras troops and proved equally successful. Col. Braithwaite when reporting the embarkation at Madras in October 1795 remarked :—

" No troops could possibly show more spirit than has been shown by the 17th Battalion on this occasion. A similar spirit has been shown by the 16th and 32nd Battalions, which were called upon to supply the few men wanted to complete the 17th. The numbers required were immediately supplied and numbers of others pressed down to the waterside in readiness should they be wanted."

The 17th M.I. remained on foreign service for five years and did not return to Madras until 1801. It was then thanked in General Orders for its exemplary zeal and spirit; and honorary badges were given to all ranks.

Early in 1795 the Nizam, being about to go to war with the Mahrattas, desired that he might be accompanied by the British Contingent; but this having been objected to by the Governor-General the Nizam took offence and dispensed with the two Madras Battalions (21st and 22nd M.I.) and the detachment of Artillery which formed the subsidiary force, and in consequence they were ordered into the Northern Circars.

But about the end of June, following the rebellion of his eldest son, the Nizam applied for the return of these troops and his request was complied with. This force in 1796 stormed the very strong fort of Raichur with comparatively little loss.

During August of the same year a force was assembled at Madras for an expedition against Manila, the sepoy portion of which, comprising the 3rd, 16th, 23rd and 24th M.I., was entirely composed of volunteers. Most of the troops had embarked, and part of the fleet had sailed when the project was suddenly abandoned in consequence of intelligence from Europe. The alacrity which the sepoys displayed in volunteering for this overseas service was subsequently recognized by the issue of brass badges which were ordered to be worn on the left arm.

1798—99

The refusal of Sir John Shore to assist the Nizam against the Mahrattas in 1795 had caused the latter to employ over 100 French Officers to organize and discipline his troops, which were formed under Monsieur Raymond into regular battalions totalling 14,000 men, with a due proportion of artillery. Shortly after the arrival of Lord Mornington at Calcutta in May 1798, it was ascertained that Tipu had entered into an alliance with the Governor of Mauritius, and that a small party of French Officers and men had landed at Mangalore and joined Tipu at Seringapatam. In consequence of this discovery the Madras Government were directed to equip the army for the field, but before declaring war, the Governor-General considered it necessary to take steps to prevent the formidable French contingent at Hyderabad from going over to Tipu, with whom the officers were known to be then in correspondence. With the agreement of the Nizam the British subsidiary force was augmented to 6,000 sepoys with a due proportion of European Artillery, and the French Contingent was disarmed and disbanded without much difficulty.

Intelligence of the invasion of Egypt by the French having reached the Governor-General on October 18th, he ordered the Madras Government to advance the army to some convenient place near the Mysore frontier, but not to engage in hostilities unless the negotiations which he commenced with Tipu to sever him from his French interests should fail. At the same time the British Fleet was directed to the Malabar Coast to intercept any further French reinforcements. The Governor-General then sailed for Madras, where he landed on December 31st and assumed charge of the Political and Military Departments. On his arrival an evasive and unsatisfactory reply was received from Tipu, and a renewal of the correspondence being attended by a like result orders were issued for the advance of the British force into Mysore. The army, consisting of 21,000 men of all arms and including eight Madras Infantry battalions, marched from Vellore under the command of Gen. Harris on February 14th, and when near Ambur was joined by the troops from Hyderabad, numbering about 16,000 with four more Madras Battalions.

Meanwhile the force from Bombay numbering some 6,400 under the command of Lt.-Gen. Stuart marched from Cannanore on February 21st and by March 2nd was encamped at Seedasir on the Coorg frontier, about 7 miles from Periapatna. Here Tipu made a determined effort to cut off the advanced brigade, but after heavy fighting in the thick jungle was finally repulsed.

The main army marching by Rayacotta encountered little or no opposition until it arrived on March 27th near Mallavelly, when Tipu attacked it with some determination but was repulsed without much difficulty. Immediately after the action Gen. Harris crossed the Cauvery river at Sosile

where his passage was least expected and camped before Seringapatam on April 5th about two miles from the south-west face of the fort. Here he was joined on the 14th by the Bombay Army, to cover whose arrival Major-Gen. Floyd had been detached with four regiments of cavalry and six battalions of infantry. Heavy fighting took place before the enemy was driven from his fortified posts south of the river into the fortress, but the only serious though ineffective counter-attack by Tipu was that on the Bombay army on April 22nd, when many of the French troops which led the assault were killed.

For a full account of the siege those interested should consult the numerous guide books available—it will suffice here to say that after subduing to some extent the enemy's guns on the west face of the fortress; the breaching batteries opened fire on the morning of April 30th, at a range of 380 yards. The shortness of the range was due to the necessity for effecting a serviceable breach with the least possible delay, not only on account of a supposed shortage of supplies in the British camp, but also because it was anticipated that Tipu's French Engineer officers, once the point of attack was definitely known, would take steps to make an assault difficult if not impossible by constructing fresh works in the rear which could not be reached by the guns of the attack. The heaviest possible fire was therefore concentrated on the north-western angle, and by the evening of May 3rd, the breach was considered practicable, while an officer's party had by night previously ascertained that the river was fordable. The troops destined for the assault, consisting of 2,500 Europeans and 2,000 sepoys, advanced to the assault at 1 p.m. on May 4th, covered by the fire of every gun which could be brought to bear and in a few minutes, led by Major-Gen. Baird, had crossed the river and ascended the breach.

Here the columns divided in accordance with orders, and the right attack reached the eastern face of the fort in less than an hour, meeting with no serious opposition except near the Mysore gate. The left attack however had to face considerably more resistance and was for some time held up till a detachment had crossed the inner ditch and enfiladed the defenders on the outer rampart.

Here Tipu commanded in person, but being wounded and forced back he was finally killed in the gateway of the inner rampart (not at the Watergate as erroneously shown by a tablet *in situ*) while endeavouring to reach the Palace, though his death was not known till after nightfall.

In these days the fall of Seringapatam is too often looked upon as an episode of minor importance, but actually it was the removal of a menace which had hung over Madras for over thirty years. Never in the years to come were the British to meet opposition so prolonged and bitter as they had faced in the four wars with Mysore. The rejoicings throughout Great Britain showed how real was the relief felt by the nation at the final removal of this menace to British interests in India.

A few words may be added on Tipu Sultan. A brave man, and a skilful general, though not to the extent of his father, he was by nature cruel and faithless. Many of the prisoners taken in the 1st and 2nd Mysore Wars were never released in accordance with the terms of the peace treaties; many more were barbarously murdered, and in his campaigns in Coorg, South Canara and Malabar many thousands of the inhabitants were butchered without discrimination of age or sex. A bigoted Musulman, he never missed an opportunity of plundering a Hindu temple, except at Seringapatam, where he desired to keep in the good graces of the Brahmin

astrologers, whom he from time to time consulted and propitiated with gifts. But with all his faults it must be admitted that he was a capable administrator, though his efforts were directed more to secure revenue for the maintenance of his army than dictated by any consideration for the welfare of his subjects.

Casualties during the siege amounted to 825 Europeans and 639 sepoys killed, wounded and missing.

The troops engaged in the capture later received the battle honour *Seringapatam*, among these being the 1st, 6th, 8th, 11th, 13th, 16th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th M.I. the lineal descendants of which now are the 1/3rd, 3/3rd, 4/3rd and 6/3rd Madras Regiment. A special medal was issued to all ranks British and Indian, and the prize money distributed was very considerable.

1799—1802

During the confusion attending the storm of Seringapatam, Dhoondiah Wagh, a notorious freebooter who had been imprisoned by Tipu, managed to effect his escape and having collected a body of horse took possession of Shimoga and neighbouring forts. Having thus provided himself with artillery, ammunition and money, he increased his forces and asserted his right to the sovereignty of the province. Two detachments consisting of the 1st, 8th, 19th and 22nd M.I. were immediately sent against him, and on August 8th the Shimoga and Honelly forts were attacked and taken by storm, Gen. Harris reporting to Government that "the gallant behaviour of the sepoys who alone were employed was highly honourable to them." But Dhoondiah escaped and though defeated several times was not finally disposed of till the

following year, by which time he had been joined by nearly the whole of Tipu's late cavalry, and had greatly augmented his forces. In May 1800, Col. Wellesley marched with a field force against this elusive foe, and after the capture of a number of forts and operations involving much strenuous marching, finally succeeded in bringing him to bay at Conagul on September 10th. In the action which followed Dhoondiah was killed and his force dispersed for good. It is recorded that information as to his exact position was given the previous night by a sepoy of the 20th M.I., whom Col. Wellesley rewarded with 200 pagodas and promotion.

Our attention must now be directed to the extreme South where the brave Marawars of Ramnad and Tinnevelly, whose ancestors had conquered and held for several centuries the greater part of Ceylon, were to inflict on British troops more than one serious reverse.

Since 1749 the Nawab of the Carnatic had experienced considerable difficulty in maintaining his authority over the Poligars or petty Rajahs in Tinnevelly and Madura, and from 1753 to 1763 they were kept in subjection only by the energy and ability of Mahomed Yusuf. In 1783, encouraged by the Dutch, they again broke into rebellion but were quickly subdued by an expedition under Col. Fullarton, and Tinnevelly remained comparatively peaceful until 1798, when an outbreak again occurred. All available troops at the time were required for the 4th Mysore War, and it was not till after the fall of Seringapatam that an expedition could be despatched. This force, consisting of some Bengal Artillery, 400 Europeans and 2 battalions of sepoys under Major Bannerman, attempted without artillery preparation to storm the fort of Panjalamkurchi, about 26 miles north-east of Palamcottah, but was repulsed with considerable loss.

Reinforcements then arrived and the defenders evacuated the fort on the following night, Katabomia Naik, the principal rebel, being captured shortly after and executed.

On February 2nd, 1801 a number of Poligars who had been imprisoned in the fort at Palamcottah succeeded in escaping and fled to Panjalamkurchi, where they were quickly joined by 4,000 men. Major Macaulay at once marched with all available troops, totalling some 900, but on arrival at Panjalamkurchi found that the fort, the walls of which, but not the bastions, had been completely destroyed in 1799, had been rebuilt and was as strong as ever. The garrison was about 1,500 strong but the people of the surrounding country rapidly assembled until there was a force of some 5,000, and Major Macaulay was forced to retreat to Palamcottah, repulsing on the way a night attack made by the enemy. Application was at once made for reinforcements, but instead of waiting for these Major Macaulay made several attempts on the enemy, all of which were unsuccessful, while in the meantime the Poligars took several small forts including Tuticorin. On March 27th reinforcements arrived and the force, now amounting to 2,800 men, reached Panjalamkurchi on the morning of the 31st. The fort was an irregular oblong about 500 feet in length and 300 feet broad and had been considerably strengthened in the interval; the whole was surrounded by a thick thorny hedge. By about 3 p.m. the guns had made what appeared to be a practicable breach in the north-west bastion and the storming party advanced to the assault covered by the fire of the remainder of the force. Under a heavy fire they succeeded in crossing the hedge and reached the top of the breach, but were unable to make any further progress, every man who showed himself being instantly killed or disabled. Finally the attempt had to be

abandoned with the loss of 4 officers and 49 men killed and 13 officers and 254 men wounded. Col. Welsh says that only 46 out of 120 Europeans in the storming party were unhurt.

The cause of the failure was ascertained on the capture of the place in May as due to the fact that the bastions were hollow and that there was no footing on the top for the assailants. The defenders, closely packed inside the bastions and armed with their 18 foot pikes, the Marawars' favourite weapon, were enabled to repulse the assault without exposing themselves.

After this repulse Major Macaulay took up a position 1,500 yards from the fort and awaited further reinforcements, which arrived on May 21st, when Lt.-Col. Agnew assumed command. A practicable breach having been made, the troops moved forward to the assault at 1 p.m. on the 24th. Their advance was impeded for some time by the hedge, and when they reached the summit of the breach they met with such an obstinate resistance that an entrance could not be effected until after a contest of over twenty minutes, when nearly all the defenders of the bastion had been killed by hand-grenades. Immediately after the capture of the bastion the Poligars, numbering about 3,000, rushed rapidly but in close order out of the fort, when they were charged by the cavalry, which inflicted considerable losses on them; the British loss amounted to 47 killed and 177 wounded. The fort no longer exists, having been razed to the ground, and the site is now a cultivated field.

After this the rebels withdrew to dense jungle, and severe fighting was necessary before the insurrection was finally quelled in October and the ringleaders executed.

Altogether these operations cost the army between 800 and 900 killed and wounded, including 40 officers. The dogged bravery which the enemy then evinced is still a characteristic of the Marawar, many thousands of whom are now serving with Madras formations.

Col. Welsh describes how one of the Poligars fighting on the side of the British, when mortally wounded, had himself carried into the presence of the British Commander. The old man who was placed upright in a chair then said in a firm voice : " I have come to show the English how a Poligar can die." He twisted his whiskers with both hands as he spoke and in that attitude expired.

The beginning of the new century saw Madras troops engaged in desultory operations in the Malabar-Wynaad and in the Ceded Districts, but no Madras Infantry formed part of the expedition to Egypt under Major-Gen. Baird in 1801, only Madras Artillery and Sappers receiving later for this service the badge of the Sphynx with the word *Egypt*.

1803—6

The curtain was now about to rise on the drama of the 2nd Mahratta War in which the Madras Sepoy was to win fresh laurels under his " Sepoy General."

The Mahrattas had first become an organized nation in the 17th century under Shivaji. On the latter's death the Government passed from the feeble hands of his successors the Rajahs of Satara into those of the astute Brahmin minister, the Peshwa at Poona. The Mahratta confederacy was then formed, consisting of the Peshwa (Baji Rao) at Poona; Holkar at Indore; the Gaekwar of Baroda; Daulat

Rao Sindhia of Gwalior; and the Rajah of Berar, who was Chief of Nagpore and also bore the title of Bhonsla.

Sindhia, who was ambitious of becoming the head of the Mahratta Empire, succeeded in winning over the Peshwa and inflicted a severe defeat on Holkar, his principal rival, in 1801; but having failed to follow up his victory was himself defeated with the Peshwa at Poona a year later. The Peshwa fled to Bassein and made a treaty with the British for the establishment of a permanent subsidiary force at Poona.

The convulsed state of the Mahratta Empire and the necessity to protect the Nizam under the terms of the agreement reached in 1800, caused the Marquis Wellesley, who had arrived in India as Governor-General in 1798, to take steps to cover the frontiers from possible invasion and to implement the treaty of Bassein. All available troops were therefore assembled to act in three columns—one under Lord Lake from Oudh; one towards Cuttack; and one from Mysore. The last-mentioned force consisted of 20,000 men under Lt.-Gen. Stuart and the subsidiary force from Hyderabad, about 9,000 strong under Col. Stevenson. But in conformity with orders received from the Governor-General the troops destined to advance into the Mahratta country were limited to 10,600 men under the command of Major-Gen. Wellesley; supported by Col. Stevenson's division. Two sepoy battalions in Wellesley's force are noticeable; the 8th M.I. whom he had specially selected " because I know it is a good corps which has seen much service ", in spite of its having suffered severely from malaria in the Wynaad during recent operations; and the 3rd P.L.I. which had marched from Madura to the Taptee, a distance of about 1,000 miles, without a single desertion.

Wellesley crossed the frontier at Harihar on March 9th, 1803, and by April 19th was within one march of the Bhor Ghat. Here he heard that Holkar intended to burn Poona before evacuating it, so with the cavalry and one battalion of infantry he made a forced march of 60 miles in 32 hours and arrived in time to save the city, which the Peshwa entered in state on May 7th. On June 4th Wellesley marched towards the Godaveri in order to watch the armies of Sindhia and Berar, who apparently intended to invade the territory of the Nizam, and when the Mahrattas commenced to advance on July 14th he called upon them to retire. This they declined to do, and having in the meantime been invested with plenary powers by the Governor-General, Wellesley determined to commence operations by attacking Ahmednagar. He arrived before the place on August 8th and found the petta occupied by a strong force of Arabs and one of Sindhia's battalions. It was immediately stormed and two days later the fort surrendered. The speedy capture of this immensely strong fortress had a great moral effect, one of the Mahratta chiefs in the British camp writing to friends in Poona :—

"These English are a strange people and their General is a wonderful man; they came here in the morning, looked at the petta wall, walked over it, killed all the garrison, and returned to breakfast! What can withstand them?"

Wellesley then moved to Aurangabad, where he met Col. Collins, who till recently had been Resident at Sindhia's
Collins, who till recently had been Resident at Sindhia's
likely to meet. "I tell you, General, as to their cavalry you may ride over them wherever you meet them; but their infantry and guns will astonish you."

Meanwhile, Col. Stevenson's division, which had been covering the Nizam's dominions, moved forward to attack the confederates, but was eluded by them, and on September 21st, in accordance with orders, joined Gen. Wellesley, who had determined to concert a combined attack on the enemy. The two divisions separated on September 22nd and moved towards Bokerdun where the enemy was reported to be, Stevenson marching due north while Wellesley took a more easterly route. The latter arrived at his ground near the village of Naulniah about 11 a.m. on September 23rd, and hearing that the enemy were within six miles of him and preparing to move off, he determined to attack at once without waiting for Stevenson. A detailed description of the Battle of Assaye which followed will be found in Chapter III. It will suffice here to say that the victory was decisive, though the British loss in a force totalling only 6,000 was extremely heavy, amounting to 1,584 of whom 428 were killed.

Gen. Wellesley remained at Assaye for a few days to make arrangements for the comfort of his wounded and the security of the captured guns and stores, while Col. Stevenson's division pursued the retreating enemy. During the two succeeding months various minor actions took place. A force of 1,500 Arabs attacked a small sepoy detachment (one coy. 23rd L.I. and details) on the march near Korjet Corygaum, but was repulsed, losing in killed alone a number exceeding that of the detachment. An unsuccessful attempt was made by the enemy's cavalry to cut off a convoy at Umber which the escort of five coys. of sepoys (13th and 18th M.I.) beat off with considerable loss. About the same time the enemy tried to take possession of the bridge of boats over the Godaveri, but were foiled by Jemadar Shaikh Mohiuddin 6th M.I., who commanded the detachment left in charge. This

officer not only repulsed the enemy but followed them up and captured part of their equipment, the affair being mentioned in General Orders and the Jemadar promoted.

Meanwhile Col. Stevenson had captured Burhampur, and the fortress of Asirgarh, and on November 29th rejoined Gen. Wellesley, who intended with their combined forces to undertake the siege of Gawilgarh. On learning however that the enemy was drawn up in force only six miles distant, Wellesley decided to attack at once in spite of the lateness of the hour. He formed up his army in two lines, the infantry in the first and the cavalry in the second supporting the right, while the Hyderabad and Mysore horse supported the left. Some little time elapsed before the lines could be formed, owing to the picquets and the sepoy battalion which led the column having been thrown into some confusion by a heavy cannonade of the enemy's guns as they emerged from a village; this was however quickly rectified by the General, who was close by and so able to rally them and bring them back on to their correct line of deployment. In fairness to the battalion concerned it must be noted that it had lost six out of eight British officers and no less than 228 rank and file out of 782 not long before at Assaye, where it had distinguished itself, and that it behaved admirably in the battle which followed and subsequent operations. The incident shows how even the best troops may be seized with a sudden panic.

As soon as the whole line was formed it advanced at 4-30 p.m. The 74th and 78th Foot were fiercely attacked by a large body of Arabs who were destroyed to a man, and Sindhia's cavalry charged the 6th M.I., which was on the left of the line, but were repulsed with a loss of 600. It was during this phase of the action that Col. Welsh records an

amusing episode. An Arab threw a spear at an officer which passed through his leg and stuck in the ground behind. The officer seized it and hurled it back transfixing his opponent who was rushing at him sword in hand. All eyes were for an instant turned on these two combatants when a sepoy Grenadier rushed out of the ranks and patting the officer on the back exclaimed: "Atcha Sahib, bahut atcha kyah." Such a ludicruous circumstance even in the heat of action could not pass unnoticed, and all enjoyed a hearty laugh before concluding the work of death on the remaining Arabs.

Elsewhere the enemy retired in the utmost disorder before the steady advance of the British line, leaving behind them 38 guns and all their ammunition; over 20 standards were also captured. The British Cavalry then took up the pursuit and followed the disorganized enemy for several miles, destroying great numbers of them and capturing transport and baggage; it is stated that had there been one hour more of daylight scarcely a man would have escaped. Our loss in this important victory was inconsiderable, amounting only to 53 killed and 308 wounded. Madras Battalions present were the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 24th M.I. now represented by 3/3rd, 5/3rd and 6/3rd Madras Regiment.

After the battle the General lost no time in commencing the siege of Gawilgarh, a fortress of great strength crowning one of the highest peaks of the Satpura Hills. Batteries were opened on December 12th and by the night of the 14th the breaches were found to be practicable. The assault which was timed for 10 a.m. the following morning was carried out successfully by Col. Stevenson's division, while the enemy's attention was diverted by feints made by two detachments from the General's camp. The garrison composed of regular

infantry which had escaped from Argaum and of Rajputs, was numerous and well armed with English muskets. Great numbers of them were killed, particularly at the breaches and in the gateways; our own loss was trifling, amounting in all to 126 killed, wounded and missing. The capture of this fortress having opened the way to Nagpore, the capital of Berar, the Raja of this place immediately sued for peace, while Sindhia, finding himself deprived of his ally, took similar steps. This brought the war to an end.

It may be noted that at the time of this campaign the troops were armed with the musket, which was decisive at 80 and effective up to 160 yards; well trained troops could fire two to three rounds in a minute. Artillery fire was decisive at 400 yards and effective at 800. When well served the English short field guns could fire 10 to 12 shots a minute.

For the operations just concluded the troops received the Army of India Medal with bars for *Assye, Argaum, Gawilghur* and *Assearghur*; and, as already mentioned, special distinctions for Assaye. The prize money, amounting to eleven lakhs, was distributed to the troops in the usual proportions.

Shortly after the conclusion of peace Gen. Wellesley, leaving Col. Stevenson's division in Berar, moved south to deal with the numerous banditti infesting the Nizam's dominions. He succeeded in coming up with their principal force at Munkaisir on February 6th, 1804, and decisively defeated them with great loss. This operation involved the infantry (8th M.I. and details of other battalions) marching 60 miles in 20 hours in order to keep up with the cavalry—a feat to which the General often referred in years to come. About the same time, another body of freebooters in the Doab, consisting of about 10,000 Mahratta horse and a number of irregular infantry, was destroyed by a field force

(included in which were the 23rd and 33rd M.I.) formed from the army of reserve. The Madras subsidiary force at Poona was also engaged in 1804–5 in Khandesh against Holkar's forts, a number of which were captured without much loss to our side. Madras Battalions engaged in these operations were the 3rd, 8th, 19th, 20th and 21st M.I.

During these years the Madras Presidency had enjoyed peace, except for minor disturbances at Dindigul and Chittoor, which were quickly suppressed, but the situation in the Wynaad and Malabar continued to be far from satisfactory. Here the Pychy Raja, as he was called, had been in more or less open rebellion since the district was ceded to the Company after the fall of Seringapatam in 1799. The area was at first garrisoned by Bombay troops, but Madras sepoys were sent by Wellesley to reinforce them after a detachment of the 1/4th Bombay Regiment had been cut up near Manantoddy in 1802. Matters were settled for the time, but after the withdrawal of the Madras troops for the Mahratta War the insurrection broke out again. Finally in 1804 the Bombay troops, numbering some 6,000, were entirely replaced by Madras troops, and the rebellion, which had increased to such an extent as to threaten the British settlements on the coast, was brought to an end by the death in action of the Pychy Raja on November 30th, 1805. Thus terminated the career of a man who had been able to persevere in hostilities against the Company for nearly nine years, during which time many thousands of lives were sacrificed and immense sums of money expended. Although more than a century has passed the memory of Kerala Varma Raja (to give his full name) is still cherished by the people of the Wynaad.

Only one item remains to be chronicled in this section, which was the serious outbreak of mutiny by the 2/23rd and

part of the 1st M.N.I. at Vellore, where the family of Tipu Sultan had been interned. The outbreak was caused by the very injudicious introduction of a new pattern of turban and by certain regulations which the sepoys considered an infringement on their caste. To what extent the rising was instigated by the Mysore Princes will perhaps never be known, but they were certainly privy to it and determined to profit by any success which it might achieve. Warnings that all was not well were unheeded, and at 2-30 a.m. on the morning of July 10th, 1806 the sepoys made an almost simultaneous attack on the British guards, on the British barracks and on the Officers' quarters in the fort. Most of the Officers and British soldiers were killed before they could recover from the surprise but a small party managed to fight their way on to the ramparts and hauled down the Mysore Flag which had been hoisted by the mutineers; they then established themselves above the main gateway.

Meanwhile Col. Gillespie, who was stationed at Arcot some 18 miles away, learning of the outbreak set out immediately with a squadron of the 19th Dragoons and the 7th Madras Cavalry. On his arrival Col. Gillespie was drawn up by a rope into the rampart, where his presence encouraged the brave men above the gateway, who being without ammunition had to trust to their bayonets alone. Not long after the galloper guns arrived, and the gate was blown open, when the Dragoons, handsomely supported by the Madras Cavalry, charged into the fort and inflicted dire retribution on the mutineers, of whom upwards of 350 were killed on the spot, while a number were taken in different parts of the country within the next few days. Five of the Mysore Princes' retainers were sentenced to either death or long terms of imprisonment, while the Princes themselves were sent to Calcutta, their complicity not having been established to such

a degree as to warrant more extreme measures. The obnoxious orders regarding dress were rescinded and both the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief with his Adjutant-General were removed from their respective offices by orders of the Court of Directors. The 1st and 23rd Regiments were struck off the strength of the army and their place was supplied by two new regiments numbered the 24th and 25th. The 1/24th, it may be added, displayed great gallantry at Seetabuldee in 1817, and in recognition of this the 24th and 25th Regiments were both eventually restored to their original position in the Army list.

So ended the Vellore Mutiny—the only stain which sullies the loyalty of the Madras Sepoy during nearly 200 years' service. Minor outbreaks had indeed occurred before and were to occur again, due to grave shortage of supplies or the pay being many months in arrears, but these never resulted in loss of life and were easily suppressed. The loyalty of the Madras Sepoy to his officers and to his service is a matter of constant comment by all historians, and it should be remembered that when the Bengal Army mutinied in 1857 there was no breath of suspicion that any Madras Regiment was affected. How great then must have been the provocation which produced the Vellore rising.

1808—9

The scene now shifts southwards to the State of Travancore. Towards the end of 1808 the subsidy payable by the Rajah having fallen considerably into arrears, the Resident urged upon him as a measure of economy the expediency of dismissing a body of regular infantry known as the Carnatic Brigade, but this proposal was not accepted. The Resident, believing that the Diwan was the principal cause of opposition,

insisted on his removal from office, which was agreed to, but during the interval required for the selection of a successor the Minister employed himself in organizing an insurrection with a view to murdering the Resident, and induced the Diwan of Cochin to join in the plot. The Residency at Cochin was attacked at midnight on December 28th, 1808 by about 1,000 Nairs, but the Resident managed to escape. At the same time a ship with 31 Privates and a surgeon of H.M.'s 12th Regiment put into Alleppey, where they were all massacred.

At this time Lt.-Col. Chalmers was at Quilon commanding the subsidiary force which consisted of the 2nd, 4th and 26th M.I. On December 29th he learnt that numbers of armed men had assembled round the Diwan's house and that a large body of Nairs was marching on Quilon from the south. These were dispersed, but soon after it was reported that Travancore troops were crossing the bar at Ivicka some five miles to the north, and a stronger detachment was sent to deal with them. On arrival at the bar it was found that a considerable number of men had already crossed and were drawn up to cover the landing of the remainder. Major Hamilton, who was in command at once attacked, killed about 400, and drove the rest into the river, but finding that the enemy were getting round his flanks in boats he withdrew to Quilon. Col. Chalmers had now been reinforced by H.M's. 12th Foot and 36th M.I., while the number of the enemy had risen to about 30,000 with 18 guns. On January 15th, 1809, information was recieved that the latter were advancing in force from several directions, and two columns were sent to attack them. The engagement lasted five hours, and resulted in the total defeat of the enemy with heavy loss and the capture of 14 guns; our casualties amounted to 141. On

January 31st the Cantonments were again attacked by the Nairs with a similar result, the enemy suffering severe losses.

Meanwhile on January 19th an attack was made by several strong bodies of the enemy on the town of Cochin, which was defended by six coys. 33rd M.I. and 50 men of H.M.'s 12th Foot under the command of Major Hewitt. The defence was made with much skill and gallantry, and the assailants after several determined attempts were repulsed at every point and compelled to retreat with the loss of about 300 men, the casualties on our side amounting to 71. For this gallant defence the 33rd M.I. was afterwards awarded the battle honour *Cochin*, the sole distinction given for this campaign.

During January 1809 about 3,000 troops were assembled in the south to relieve the pressure on Col. Chalmers at Quilon. This force, which included the 3rd, 13th and 25th M.I. and was under the command of Lieut.-Col. Sentleger, came before the Aramboly lines on February 6th. This line of fortification guarded the break in the ghats about three miles in width through which the road to Palamcottah runs. It was defended by walls of masonry with bastions at intervals armed with cannon and its flanks rested on impenetrable jungle. The Colonel being without a battering train determined to attempt a *coup de main*. Major Welsh, 3rd P.L.I., with two companies 69th Foot and his own battalion, after a six hours' climb during the hours of darkness succeeded in escalading the strong point known as the southern redoubt, which enfiladed the whole line, and by 8 a.m. on the 10th this formidable position was entirely in our possession. Col. Sentleger then marched on Nagercoil, where the enemy had assembled in some strength, and compelled them to retreat with the loss of 9 guns, after which

he moved north and reached Trivandrum on the 28th where he took up a position on the south of the city.

Meanwhile Col. Chalmers at Quilon had been reinforced by H.M's. 19th Foot and now felt himself sufficiently strong to attack the enemy's position at Killianoor, which was protected by batteries having a deep nullah full of water in their front and defended by about 5,000 men. One brigade was ordered to turn the flank while the other made a frontal attack. Both attacks were successful and the enemy took to flight, leaving their guns behind; our losses were small. After this successful action Col. Chalmers marched to Trivandrum and encamped a few miles north of the city, shortly after Col. Sentleger had occupied a similar position on the south. An agreement with the Rajah was then concluded and operations in Travancore came to an end. In the meantime a strong detachment (including the 11th, 24th and 28th M.I.) under Lieut.-Col. Cuppage entered Cochin from the north, and remained encamped about twelve miles north of the town until affairs were finally settled in that State also.

1810—12

The Madras Army was now to take part in further overseas operations. Between 1792 and 1809 the trade of the East India Company suffered severely from the attacks of French ships of war and privateers based on Mauritius and Bourbon. These losses at length became so serious that in 1809 a small detachment was sent from Bombay to occupy the island of Rodrigues, which it was intended to use as a naval base. The operation was effected without difficulty, and Government now resolved to attempt a complete reduction of the French islands. Accordingly a force of 1,650

Europeans and 1,900 sepoys including the 6th and 24th M.I. embarked at Madras on May 8th, 1810 and arrived off St. Denis, the capital of Bourbon, on July 6th. The troops landed after experiencing some difficulty from the surf and captured the whole island after slight resistance, but disasters to the fleet resulted in Bourbon being blockaded for a time.

Meanwhile a second and larger expedition was being fitted out for the capture of Mauritius; the Madras portion of the force numbered 3,600 men and included the Madras Volunteer Battalion over 1,000 strong. The expedition reached Mauritius on September 29th and the troops were landed without resistance. An advance on Port Louis was made the following day, which met with only slight opposition, and the island capitulated a few days later. No less than five frigates, three corvettes and twenty-four merchantmen were captured in the harbour, while 209 pieces of heavy ordnance were found upon the works, and about 2,000 English seamen and soldiers who had been taken prisoner were released from confinement. The Madras troops returned early in 1812, when they were complimented in a Government Order "for the alacrity with which they embarked, the gallantry which they displayed when opposed to the enemy, and for their uniform good conduct on all occasions during the period of their absence from the Coast." Medals were given shortly afterwards to the Indian troops but it was not till 1838 that the 6th and 24th M.N.I. and the Sappers and Miners were permitted to carry the word *Bourbon* on their Colours and appointments.

1812—17

From 1812 to 1814 a Field Force of Madras troops was actively employed in the Southern Mahratta country in support of the Peshwa's authority; they acquitted themselves

well and received the thanks of Government. During the same years minor operations also took place in the Wynaad, Northern Circars and Kurnool.

In 1816 and 1817 the northern districts of the Madras Presidency suffered much from the intrusions of Mahratta freebooters termed Pindaries, who being invariably mounted and accustomed to march immense distances (sometimes upwards of 60 miles) by roads almost impracticable to regular troops, proved a very elusive foe to the detachments detailed for the protection of British territory. On rare occasions they were surprised and dispersed but rapidly re-assembled, and their depredations had become so serious and the atrocities perpetrated by them so grave that Government decided to root out the trouble at the source. It was realized that as the Pindaries resided in the territories of Sindhia and Holkar, this would probably involve a Mahratta War, but Government were prepared to take that risk in view of the seriousness of the situation, and orders were therefore issued to assemble the necessary troops. A Grand Army, as it was called, consisting of troops from Bengal and numbering over 43,000 was formed in the north, while Madras supplied the greater portion of the Army of the Deccan, totalling over 70,000 men and including 21 Madras Battalions.

1817—19

Space does not permit a detailed account of the relations existing at the time beween the various Mahratta rulers and the British Government or of the military operations which ensued over so vast an area. It will suffice to extract those worthy of remark which concern the Madras sepoy.

Before this 3rd Mahratta War commenced two actions took place which were very creditable to our troops.

Major H. F. Smith, 27th M.I., then serving with the Poona Subsidiary Force, was sent from Sirur with six companies of his battalion to cut off a body of about 3,500 Mahratta horse retreating northwards. He came upon their track near the river Beema, and following by forced marches overtook them at Patree above the ghats of Khandesh at daybreak on April 17th, 1817, just as they were moving from their encamping ground. Seventy of the insurgents were killed and the rest fled leaving a quantity of arms and a number of horses. The detachment on this occasion marched 150 miles in 5 days.

An even more spirited action was the capture of Dossanah not long after by Col. Scott with the 43rd M.I., some cavalry and four guns. On arrival at the place Col. Scott came to the conclusion that the means at his disposal did not warrant an open attack on the fort, and decided in the first instance to assault the petta in the hope of being able to enter the fort along with the fugitives. Ladders were hastily made with tent poles, small branches of trees and cavalry heel ropes, and the storming party, covered by the fire of the guns, quickly carried the petta with trifling loss. On getting possession of the petta it was found to be completely cut off from the fort by a high wall with a gate in the centre. This gate was forced and the guns brought to bear upon the fort whereupon the garrison, consisting principal of Arabs and Sikhs surrendered. The loss of this stronghold contributed more than anything else to the expulsion of Trimbuckjee's forces from Khandesh.

The scene now shifts to Nagpore where the Rajah's forces attacked the small subsidiary force of three troops of Bengal cavalry and two Madras Battalions at Seetabuldee on November 26th, 1817. The desperate action which ensued

is described in detail in Chapter III. Reinforcements having arrived, the Rajah's forces were attacked on December 16th, outside Nagpore, and dispersed with the loss of 70 guns; our casualties amounted only to 144 killed and wounded, but as nearly all the wounded had been hit by cannon shot many of them died.

The enemy having withdrawn into the city of Nagpore further operations became necessary, and by December 23rd, a breach having been made which was considered practicable, an assault was launched, but this failed owing to unforeseen obstacles, our loss amounting to 307 killed and wounded. The Arab garrison however, having done enough to save their honour and being unwilling to abide the result of a regular siege, surrendered on terms. The Madras battalions engaged in the Nagpore actions were the 2nd, 21st, 23rd and 26th M.I. and at Seetabuldee the 1st and 39th M.I.

Meanwhile the 1st, 3rd and 5th Divisions had encamped on the southern bank of the Nerbudda and from there carried out a combined movement against the Pindaries in Malwa, which, however, though inflicting severe losses on the enemy, failed to effect their final destruction, owing to the connivance of Sindhia and the intervention of Holkar's army. The latter was brought to action at Maheidpoor on December 21st, 1817, and decisively defeated. A full account of this historic battle is given in Chapter III.

Further operations against the Pindaries in January and February 1818 resulted in the death or surrender of their leaders and the final dispersal of their forces, but this was not effected without considerable fighting, the storming of numerous forces and long marches, in all of which the Madras sepoy fully proved his worth.

The war finally concluded with the capture of the strong hill fort of Asseerghur where the Rajah of Nagpore was believed to have taken refuge. The petta was stormed with little loss on March 17th, 1819, and regular siege operations were commended, resulting in the capture of the lower fort on March 30th. The upper fort was immensely strong, and the only access to it except by a sally port was by steep steps leading through five successive gateways, the whole hill having been scarped all round the foot to a height of 100 feet. On the summit there were several large cavaliers mounting unusually heavy guns. Active operations involving much labour and fatigue were carried on against the upper fort from April 1st to 7th, up to which time the fortress commander appears to have entertained no apprehensions. But when on April 8th, the batteries began to play with vigour and effect his courage gave way and he surrendered unconditionally. Our loss during the siege amounted to 313, that of the enemy being considerably less. Madras Battalions engaged in this operation were the 7th, 14th, 23rd, 27th, 28th and 34th M.I.

During these years the Presidency remained tranquil, except for minor disturbances in the Northern Circars caused by feuds in the hill zemindaries. The service was extremely harassing on account of the impenetrable and unhealthy nature of the country, and our troops suffered more from malaria than at the hands of the insurgents. Such fighting as there was devolved on small detachments and one deserves mention. A Naik and five sepoys of the 20th M.I. had been sent to guard a village near the cantonment of Berhampore. On the night of July 16th, 1817, they were attacked by a large body of men armed with matchlocks, swords and spears, but they stood firm, repulsed three attacks

and finally beat off their assailants with considerable loss. The Naik was promoted Havildar for his gallantry by order of the Commander-in-Chief.

In 1818 a rebellion broke out in Ceylon, and at the request of the Governor a detachment of Madras troops was sent to suppress it, which was done without difficulty. The battalions engaged were the 29th M.I., 36th M.I., and 5 companies of the 19th M.I.

1824—26

From 1821 onwards the Burmese had committed numerous acts of aggression against British territory, and since remonstrances proved unavailing the Governor-General prepared for war. The difficulty in inducing the Bengal sepoys to embark on foreign service prevented their being employed except to a very limited extent, and consequently it was determined to send the principal part of the expedition from Madras. The force, which included five Madras battalions, reached Rangoon on May 11th, 1824, and captured the town without difficulty. Before the expedition sailed Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, had urged upon the Governor-General the necessity for sending with it sufficient transport for use on arrival in Burma and had offered to provide all the bullocks required, but his suggestions were ignored. Lord Amherst anticipated that bullock transport and boats would be available in Rangoon for a further advance by land and water on Ava, the capital, but these expectations were not realized and the force found itself dependent on India for both food and transport. Consequently no advance could be attempted before the end of the rainy season, except to a strictly limited extent.

At the commencement of operations the Burmese restricted themselves to the defence of stockades—these were constructed of teak beams or young trees planted side by side in the ground and bound together at the top by transverse beams, leaving embrasures or loopholes through which the defenders might fire without being exposed. Their height varied from 10 to 20 feet and platforms were fixed in the interior on an earth ramp from which the garrison might overtop the paling. Sometimes an outer and an inner ditch were added, while numerous bamboo spikes enhanced the difficulty of access. The nature of the materials used offered little resistance to cannon shot, which generally passed through the stockade without effecting a breach. Unless provided with adequate scaling ladders the troops found great difficulty in storming these stockades and a repulse occurred at Kemmendine on June 3rd, though the place was carried on the following day. After the loss of this post the Burmese withdrew to Donabyu, but towards the end of the month advanced in force on Rangoon. They first contacted the 7th and 43rd M.I. who repulsed them with loss and then drove them with the bayonet from the hill which they had occupied. An attack next day on the 12th M.I. at Dallah was also repelled.

These checks deterred the Burmese from making a general attack on our lines, but they still remained in force and continued to harass our pickets. It was therefore decided to dislodge them from their positions, which was done on July 8th, the enemy suffering heavy loss. During the remainder of the month and August our troops were employed on various minor amphibious operations with success, but on October 5th the Light Brigade sustained a severe repulse at the Kyaikalo Pagoda, some 14 miles from Rangoon, due to

lack of scaling ladders and the enemy withholding their fire till the assailants had almost reached the foot of the stockade. Our loss, which amounted to 7 officers and 91 men killed and wounded, fell principally on the 34th L.I.; the enemy was found to have abandoned the position on the day following. In the meantime the Government of Ava had collected their whole disposable force, estimated at about 60,000 men, under Bandoola, their best general. This army advanced on Rangoon and arrived in its immediate vicinity on November 30th, purposely unopposed in order that the opportunity of striking a decisive blow might thus be ensured. About 4 a.m. on December 1st the post of Kemmendine was attacked by the enemy in force but they were repulsed with great gallantry by the garrison, consisting of 58 N.C.Os. and men, Madras European Regiment and the 26th M.I. The enemy however continued his efforts, making repeated attacks by day and night, assisted by a large number of war boats, up to December 9th, when he finally gave up the attempt. Full details of this gallant defence will be found in Chapter III.

Meanwhile the main Burmese army had closed in on the British position round the Shwe Dagon Pagoda and commenced to entrench themselves. Their advanced posts having been driven in, and several local attacks repulsed, the British assumed the offensive and a general attack made on December 7th resulted in the complete defeat of the Burmese "Grand Army." Notwithstanding their losses the Burmese made a further stand at Kokine where they were again defeated with heavy loss on December 15th, after which Bandoola returned to Donabyu to reorganize. Here he was attacked and killed and with his death vanished the last hope of success for the Burmese, though a full year was to elapse, including some

heavy fighting notably at Prome and Pegu, before the main British army reached Yandaboo, only 60 miles short of the capital, and the terms offered were accepted by the Burmese Court.

The last action of the war was at Sittang, and since it was a typical one it is given in rather fuller detail to show exactly what our troops had to contend with. A detachment had been sent to capture the place, but had failed to do so, and after several gallant but fruitless attempts to escalade, had been forced to withdraw with considerable loss. On hearing of this repulse Col. Pepper set out from Shwegyin with a detachment of 70 Madras Europeans and 450 sepoys of the 3rd, 12th and 34th M.I., and landed at Sittang about 8 a.m. on January 11th, 1826, when the first objects which met the eyes of the troops were the naked and mangled bodies of their comrades suspended by the heels from gibbets on the bank. The troops were formed into three columns, each with two scaling ladders to attack different parts of the stockade, the left column being composed of 42 European Grenadiers and 160 3rd L.I. Fortunately we have an eyewitness account from an officer who accompanied this column.

A previous reconnaisance had shown the stockade to be of great extent, built on a hill with an abrupt ascent and commanding every approach. It was from 12 to 14 feet high, constructed entirely of teak and full of loopholes. All along the northern face there lay a creek quite unfordable except at low water, in consequence of which the assault did not begin till 2 p.m. when the troops moved to their several destinations. The left column had to cross the creek, which was between forty and fifty yards broad, in doing which the shorter men were up to their necks in water, and all were obliged to carry their pouches on their bayonets. Not a shot

was fired from the stockade during the crossing but when passing through the jungle to the left to gain their allotted position the column was exposed to fire from the enemy's skirmishers, by which a few men were wounded. On reaching the edge of the jungle the stockade was seen about seventy yards away, and the troops advanced at the double, but before they had got half way a heavy fire was opened on them, by which many were killed or wounded, and the ladders were dropped. These were raised again, carried up the steep ascent and planted against the stockade in spite of the enemy's vigorous attempts to throw them off by spear thrusts through the loopholes. One of them broke owing to the number of men who crowded on to it but escalade was effected by means of the other, and the men of the centre and right attacks got in about the same time. No quarter was given and about 500 of the enemy were killed out of a computed total of 1,500. Our loss amounted to 86 including 7 officers.

This campaign was essentially one of jungle warfare in which our troops had no previous experience, and it was greatly to their credit that they did so well. The Burman proved a stout opponent and while his superior physique gave him an advantage in hand to hand fighting, the nature of the country afforded him every opportunity for infiltration tactics and for the rapid construction of formidable stockades.

Madras battalions taking part in this 1st Burma War were the 1st, 3rd, 7th, 9th, 12th, 18th, 22nd, 26th, 28th, 30th, 32nd, 34th, 36th, 38th and 43rd M.I.—while 2 others, the 10th and 16th M.I., formed part of the large expedition sent from Bengal to subdue Arracan, which was finally effected after some initial reverses had been suffered by the Bengal troops. On their return to the Presidency in 1826 all ranks received a donation of extra batta and the thanks of the

Governor-General and both the Houses of Parliament, while the Governor of Madras remarked:—"In many former instances Native troops of this Presidency have cheerfully gone upon foreign service; but in none has the spirit of enterprise been so high and the devotion to the service so universal as in the late war. The orders for foreign service were received by all of them with enthusiasm; whole regiments embarked without the deficiency of a man; and repeated instances occurred of extraordinary forced marches of parties absent from the headquarters of a regiment about to embark, in order that they might not be left behind." The troops which took part in this first Burma war were given the battle honour *Ava* or *Arracan*, while the Indian ranks received a special medal.

During these years Madras troops in India were engaged in one instance only. A serious disturbance broke out at the fort of Kittoor about 20 miles from Dharwar in October 1824, when the Collector with the greater part of his small escort was suddenly set upon and massacred. A force was quickly collected at Belgaum during November, including the 6th and 14th M.I. and 23rd W.L.I.—the last named having carried out a forced march of 192 miles in 8 days, during which several rivers in flood were crossed. The fort at Kittoor was invested on December 1st and on the 3rd, after a fortified outwork had been carried, the guns opened on the fort. Shortly after the place surrendered, its submission being hastened by the fact that the 23rd L.I. had in the meantime entered the upper fort by escalade. Our loss was trifling, viz., 3 killed and 25 wounded.

1831—39

Minor operations took place in Malacca in 1831–32 against local Malays, which though of small importance are of

interest since only Madras troops were employed. In August 1831 a small column of 150 men of the 29th M.I., with two guns, was despatched to reduce a refractory chief to obedience, but the numbers and determination of the enemy had been greatly underestimated and after four days' fighting against greatly superior numbers in dense forest, our troops ran short of supplies and were forced to withdraw. The enemy now attacked the stockaded post at Soongya Pattye in great strength and by August 28th the situation had become critical, the garrison being reduced to one barrel of powder, while casualties were so numerous that every wounded man who could pull a trigger had to assist in the defence. Fortunately the Light company 29th M.I. managed to fight its way through in time and the post was evacuated pending the despatch of reinforcements from Madras. These arrived early in 1832 and consisted of the 5th M.I. and more Madras Artillery, when the offensive was resumed and operations were brought to a successful conclusion after heavy fighting in which a number of stockades had to be stormed.

Madras troops were now to have a further taste of jungle warfare, this time in India.

In January 1833 the Government of Madras remonstrated against the tyranical rule of the Rajah of Coorg who had been in power since 1820, but the Rajah, who was undoubtedly subject to violent fits of insanity, having highly inflated ideas of his own power and importance, resolved on war. A force some 6,000 strong was therefore organized to depose him and this, owing to the bad roads and difficulties of supply, was divided into four columns, which were to converge on Mercara the capital. Two of these columns were so roughly handled by the Coorgs that they were forced to withdraw but the others were successful in reaching their

objective and the Rajah surrendered, finally dying in England in 1862. Casualties in this short campaign amounted to 6 officers and 87 men killed and about 200 wounded. Madras Battalions engaged in these operations were the 4th, 9th, 20th, 31st, 35th, 36th, 40th and 48th M.I.

At the close of the Coorg War certain taluks which had been ceded to Coorg in 1799 were retransferred to South Kanara, and in 1837 discontent arose owing to the Collector of Mangalore demanding cash payments in place of previous assessments in kind.

At this time Mangalore was garrisoned by the 2nd M.I. and on March 30th, 1837, a detachment of 180 men under Major Dawkes was sent to accompany the Collector to Puttur about 25 miles distant. But owing to lack of firmness in handling the situation, the whole countryside was now in a state of revolt and the detachment, cut off from all supplies, had to retreat to Mangalore, losing 28 killed and 19 wounded. A few days later reinforcements arrived from Cannanore under Col. Green 4th M.I. and the rebels were soon dispersed. A rising in Coorg had been planned to take place simultaneously, but this also was speedily suppressed, thanks to the loyalty of the Coorg leaders and the general body of the Coorgs.

Only one item remains to be recorded in this section. On March 23rd, 1839, a Havildar's Guard of the 18th M.I. while on duty at the treasury of Malwan near Belgaum was attacked by a large party of armed men, who were repulsed with the loss of 16 killed, 20 wounded and 107 prisoners. The gallantry of the guard was acknowledged in a General Order and the Havildar was promoted to Jemadar.

1840—45

The tide of war was now flowing north and Madras Infantry had no share in the 1st Afghan or the 1st and 2nd Sikh wars, but were still called upon for service overseas, and Madras battalions (the 2nd, 6th, 14th, 36th, 37th and 41st M.I. and the Madras Rifles) took part in the 1st China War, 1840–42. Their conduct in these operations evoked the following eulogium from the Commander-in-Chief :—

" Devotedness to the service and attachment to their officers have always marked the character of the Madras sepoys. Their perseverance and gallantry before the enemy have secured for them the confidence of the British soldiers who fight side by side with them in assaulting a breach or who support them under fire when exposed to the attacks of the enemy. It is the mutual confidence that exists between the British soldier and the Madras sepoy that makes them so formidable in the field."

The 37th M.I. particularly distinguished itself at Canton on 30th May 1841. Cut off from the rest of the force during a heavy thunderstorm, which rendered their muskets useless, and surrounded by several thousands of Chinese troops, they repulsed every attack until relieved. Special mention of this action was made by the Duke of Wellington in the House of Lords, and the Regiment was renamed the 37th Madras Grenadiers for its services on this occasion.

The 2nd and 6th M.I. took a notable part in the capture of Chin-Kiang-Foo on July 20th, 1842. In company with the 55th Foot they escaladed the walls under a heavy fire of round and grape shot, cleared the ramparts at the point of the bayonet in the face of stubborn resistance and under an intense fire from the houses below, and then threw open the

gates to admit the remainder of the force, when enemy resistance soon ceased.

The 2nd M.I. remained as part of the Chusan Field Force after peace had been signed on August 29th, 1842, and did not return to Madras till June 1845.

All troops taking part in this war received the battle honour *China* and the crest of the Imperial dragon.

Operations in the South Mahratta country took place during 1844–45 in which the 3rd P.L.I., 8th, 16th and 20th M.I. were engaged. Beyond the fact that some minor actions were fought and a number of forts captured, no details of these operations are available, except that the 20th M.I. were specially mentioned as at an action involving the "descent of the Elephant Rock", and that sepoy Kolappa, 16th M.I., was presented with a medal by the Lord Provost of Perth at the desire of the citizens of that town to mark their sense of his gallantry in protecting and carrying off the body of their fellow townsman Lieutenant P. Campbell, 2nd Bombay N.I., who was killed in action in December 1844.

1852—54

The Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 had seemed to hold out a promise of lasting friendship between British and Burmese, but the latter soon forgot their losses and so quickly did their former arrogance return that in a few years it became evident that the Government of India would sooner or later be compelled to assert its rights by force of arms. So insulting did the behaviour of the Court of Ava become that the representative of the Governor-General had to be withdrawn in 1840, but Government was at the time fully occupied with

the 1st Afghan War and later with the two Sikh wars, and it was not till 1851 that Lord Dalhousie was able to turn his attention to affairs in Burma. Certain acts of oppression on British merchants brought matters to a head and satisfaction having been refused, war became inevitable.

Since the Bengal sepoys showed their usual disinclination to embark, the greater part of the force which totalled 5,800 men was provided by Madras and included the 5th, 26th and 35th M.I. General Godwin who was in command first attacked Martaban, which was carried by storm after a sharp but ineffectual resistance by the Burmese, and then proceeded to Rangoon. On April 12th, the 18th and the 51st Foot and the 40th Bengal N.I. were landed, but made little progress in the face of fierce resistance and the intense heat of the sun, which caused many casualties. As in the previous war the enemy sent out strong parties of skirmishers to harass the flanks of the column and the inevitable stockade was encountered. Under cover of four guns it was stormed by four coys., 51st Foot and a detachment of Madras Sappers, though not without considerable loss, and owing to the exhaustion of the troops this marked the limit of the day's action. The 13th was spent in bringing up heavy guns and in reconnaissance, while the ships kept up an occasional fire on the various stockades. On the following day the advance was resumed, and the enemy's position on the Shwe Dagon Pagoda stormed at the cost of 149 casualties. Having secured Martaban and Rangoon, Gen. Godwin next turned his attention to Bassein, to capture which 400 of the 51st Foot and 300 of the 9th M.I. were detached. On May 18th the flotilla arrived off the Burmese position, which consisted of a well built mud fort mounting several guns. The Burmese reserved their fire till the attacking columns approached,

but our troops were not to be denied and stormed the position with great gallantry.

In August 1852 further reinforcements arrived from Bengal and Madras, the latter including the 9th, 19th, 30th and 49th M.I., and Gen. Godwin, having collected a strong flotilla of Burmese boats, moved on Prome which was captured with little loss. He then proceeded to Pegu, which was reached on October 20th, when reconnaissance showed that the Burmese position was strongly fortified. The troops, which included the 5th M.I., disembarked on the 21st and after capturing an advanced post, cut their way through the jungle and after a fatiguing march of two miles arrived in front of the main gate. Here the Burmese were in great strength and opened a heavy fire but the troops pressed on with vigour, and charging with fixed bayonets, drove the enemy headlong from his defences. An advance was now made on the pagoda, from which the Burmese speedily retired, and leaving 200 Madras Fusiliers and 200 of the 5th M.I. to garrison the place, Gen. Godwin returned to Rangoon. The slight resistance which the enemy had so far offered in this campaign, so different from that displayed in the previous war, apparently led the British Commander to underestimate his enemy, with the inevitable result that the small garrison at Pegu was closely besieged by a large force of the Burmese, and one attempt at relief having failed it became necessary for Gen. Godwin himself to undertake the task at the head of 1,300 men. This was effectively carried out and the enemy were routed with heavy loss.

In the meantime a revolution occurred at Ava, and Mindon Min ascended the throne. He was averse to war and anxious for peace but declined to sign any treaty. Lord Dalhousie therefore decided to annex the Province of Pegu but to make

no further move northwards. In furtherance of this policy military operations were therefore restricted to re-establishing law and order throughout the Province, in which numerous bands of dacoits had sprung up on the disappearance of the Burmese army. The suppression of these involved considerably more fighting than previously experienced in this campaign, and one sharp reverse was sustained by Bengal troops near Donabyu, the scene of such hard fighting in the previous war. Taken as a whole the campaign is not comparable with that of 1824–26, since owing to the chaotic state of administration the Burmese were never able to put into the field a force of any size, and they had no General of the calibre of Bandoola.

Madras battalions taking part in the 2nd Burma War were the 1st, 5th, 9th, 12th, 19th, 26th, 30th, 35th and 49th M.I., all of which received the battle honour *Pegu*. It is worth noting that Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General insisted on Madras troops being employed in this campaign, since the Bombay regiments had recently been given the opportunity of active service in the Sikh Wars.

1857—60

For some time past signs had not been lacking that all was far from well with the Bengal Army. It had emerged from the recent Sikh Wars with little credit and the state of discipline had sunk to a very low level, largely owing to the inveterate Bengal practice of promoting both British and Indian Officers by strict seniority and retaining them long after they had become useless. Lt.-Gen. E. F. Burton records that Madras officers who met Bengal troops in Burma in 1852 spoke with astonishment at the want of respect with which they treated their own officers and which amounted

to absolute insolence to officers of other Presidencies serving in the same locality.

Between 1844 and 1852 no less than four mutinies of Bengal regiments had occurred, due to dissatisfaction over the question of extra allowances, and when in 1857 greased cartridges were introduced for use with the new Enfield Rifle, those engaged in subversive activities seized upon this pretext to incite the sepoys to mutiny. The first outbreak occurred in May 1857, and rapidly spread till the greater part of Northern and Central India was in a state of revolt.

At the time the number of British troops in India was dangerously low due to the recent Crimean campaign and expeditions to Persia and China, and this was undoubtedly an important factor in the calculations of the mutineers. Emissaries had been sent to test the loyalty of the other Presidency armies, but met with little success in Bombay, and in Madras with none at all. The Madras army had no grievances nor sympathies with the Brahmin sepoys of Bengal. What they had seen of them in occasional garrison reliefs and especially in Burma in 1852, had not tended to cameraderie. The Brahmin and other high caste sepoys looked down, as from an immensely superior height, upon the Madrassi, and took every opportunity to show this feeling. It is not surprising therefore that in this hour of trial the Madras sepoys not only remained loyal but volunteered for active service against the rebels, petitioning " to be granted an opportunity of proving their faithful attachment to the Government which had cherished them." In view however of certain possible eventualities in the Peninsula the Governor-General decided that the bulk of the Madras Army should for the time being remain in the south, and in consequence the force sent from Madras in July 1857 to assist in

the reconquest of North India was at first limited to one Brigade.

The Bengal Native Army in 1857 numbered over 120,000, and though some units remained faithful to their salt the great majority mutinied, their strength being increased by the forces of some Native States, and local partisans.

The military operations during the years 1857–59 centred in the North Western Province, in which Delhi was then included, and Central India with Bundelkhand. In the following narrative only those in which Madras battalions took part are described. The Madras Brigade consisting of the 17th and 27th M.I. joined Gen. Windham's force at Cawnpore on November 15th, 1857; the 17th M.I. was detached to garrison Futtehpore to maintain communications between Allahabad and Cawnpore, while the 27th M.I. after seeing considerable fighting at Cawnpore was sent to re-inforce Outram at Lucknow. Here it took part in the defence of the Alambagh, where Outram's small force of 4,400 held out for twelve weeks against repeated and most determined attacks by the enemy estimated at 120,000 with 100 guns. Later it formed part of the Oudh Field Force, and in all was on active service for two years. It was granted the battle honour *Lucknow* and all ranks received the Mutiny medal with clasps for *Lucknow* and *Central India.*

Meanwhile a second Madras Force was being assembled at Jubbulpore under the command of Gen. Whitlock, to co-operate with Sir Hugh Rose's Bombay division in the subjugation of Central India, and to distract the mutineers' attention from Sir Colin Campbell's operations in Oudh. Owing to the distance which it had to march Whitlock's force did not reach its first objective till April 19th, 1858,

when after a successful action at Banda, Kirwee was captured, a fabulous amount of treasure and jewels being taken and subsequently awarded to the troops as prize money, the distribution causing much heart-burning among those who did not participate. Included in the force were the 1st, 19th, 30th and 50th M.I. all of which received in due course the medal with bar for *Central India.*

Histories of the Bengal Mutiny, whether official or non-official, tend to concentrate on the operations round Delhi, Cawnpore and Lucknow, and Sir Hugh Rose's campaign in Central India, and it has proved extremely difficult to record all the actions in which Madras Battalions were engaged in other parts of the Peninsula. The following brief list of their activities must not be considered as in any way complete but merely as indicative of the services performed.

In the Nagpore Field Force 1858–59 were the 26th, 32nd, 33rd and 40th M.I. all of whom received the medal with bar for *Central India* for various operations. The 30th and 47th M.I. formed part of the Bellary Field Force, while the 3rd P.L.I. from Cannanore, the 8th M.I. from Mangalore and the 16th M.I. were employed in conjunction with Bombay troops in North Canara. These Units received the medal only without bar.

The Madras Rifles were actively engaged in Bengal from September 5th, 1857, to August 2nd, 1860, and with them served the 28th, 34th and 49th M.I. All these received the medal without bar, while the 17th M.I. previously mentioned was awarded the bar for *Central India.*

Altogether no less than 18 Madras Infantry battalions together with Madras Artillery, Cavalry, Rifles and Sappers

took part in suppressing the Bengal Mutiny, and in a despatch dated August 19th, 1859, the Secretary of State for India said :—

" The Commander-in-Chief's minute contains only a slight sketch of the important services which have been rendered by the Madras Army during the great contest in Northern India. The *great fact* has been the perfect fidelity of that army, and the perfect loyalty of the twenty-three millions of persons who inhabit this Presidency, which enabled the resources of the south of India to be freely put forth in support of our hard-pressed countrymen in the north."

Again Lt.-Gen. Sir Patrick Grant said :—

" The services in the field of the troops of this Presidency employed in the suppression of the rebellion and mutiny are now a matter of history and the glowing terms in which they have been recognized must endure for ever, an unperishable record of the achievements of these noble soldiers. It can never be forgotten that, to their immortal honour, the Native troops of the Madras army have been, in the memorable words of the Earl of Ellenborough, ' faithful found among the faithless '."

Her Majesty The Queen also graciously expressed her thanks to the Madras troops " for the useful service they have rendered during the past two years ", and to all the Madras Native army for its loyalty.

During these two years 17,000 Madras recruits were enlisted and the establishment of 52 regiments of infantry was augmented by four extra battalions. But the memory of man is short, and between 1860 and 1864 not only were the four extra battalions reduced, but twelve of the regular regiments suffered a like fate. Comment is superfluous.

Meanwhile the 2nd China War had broken out and a force was despatched to capture Canton in December 1857, the 38th M.I. being the only Indian Unit present. In May 1858 the Taku Forts were captured and in the following month peace was signed; but as it was not implemented hostilities again broke out. Pre-occupations in India prevented the despatch of more troops till 1860, when a strong combined force of British and French troops was assembled and Pekin was captured, this bringing the war to an end. In addition to the 38th M.I. it appears that the 2nd, 12th and 21st M.I. were also employed in this campaign.

1878—80

For twenty years the Madras Regiments had seen no active service, since they had taken no part in the Abyssinian campaign of 1867, for which the Bombay army had provided the great majority of the Indian troops employed.

But in 1878, as the result of tension between England and Russia, hope ran high in the Madras army that they might again take the field. In April of that year orders were issued for the despatch of an expeditionary force to Malta, in which the 25th M.I. were included. The troops reached Malta in May and remained there only about a month when, owing to a peaceful agreement having been reached between England and Russia, they returned to India.

Though disappointed at the outcome of this expedition, a further opportunity for service, though on a limited scale, occurred when the 2nd Afghan War broke out, and the 1st, 4th, 15th, 21st and 30th M.I. joined the army in the field in 1879. Although unfortunate in having no opportunity of taking part in any general action, the Madras battalions did

a great amount of useful work with minor expeditions, and thoroughly earned the battle honour *Afghanistan 1879–80*.

It is recorded that the Madras battalions serving in the Khyber were the healthiest of any Indian troops employed.

1882—85

In consequence of a military revolt in Egypt headed by Arabi Pasha, it was decided in July 1882 to despatch a British expeditionary force to that country. The division furnished by India included the 4th and 31st M.I., but these took no part in the fighting, as they were retained in reserve at Aden, till they returned to India in October of the same year.

In 1885 an Indian contingent was sent to Suakin, but no Madras troops accompanied the original force except Sappers. After a hard fought action at McNeill's Zareba the expeditionary force was withdrawn and a bare garrison was maintained at Suakin. Details of this force are not available but regimental records show that the 20th M.I. formed part of it for a time.

1885—89

The scene now shifts again to Burma, when for the third time Madras troops were to be employed on a large scale. After the 2nd Burma War of 1852 relations between the British and Burmese, though not very satisfactory, remained on a more or less friendly basis so long as King Mindon Min lived. At his death in 1878, however, his son Thibaw came to the throne, and the situation rapidly deteriorated. Thibaw started his reign with a bloody massacre of about eighty of his relations, and many indignities heaped on British subjects made it clear that the violent party then in power desired a

rupture with the British Government. Owing however to our commitments at this time in Zululand and Afghanistan, no troops could be spared to enforce our demands on Burma. The respite thus given and the news of British reverses at Maiwand and Isandhlwana encouraged Thibaw to further atrocities, which culminated in a plot, fortunately unsuccessful, to massacre the British Resident and his escort. After the withdrawal of the Resident, Thibaw began to intrigue with various foreign powers, and a treaty was finally signed with France in January 1885, giving to that country controlling interest over the upper Irrawaddy. War thus became inevitable, and on November 10th orders were issued for the division which had already been assembled in Lower Burma to advance on Mandalay. This force, which was under the command of Major-Gen. Prendergast, V.C. (who had won his decoration when serving with Madras Sappers in the Mutiny) included the 1st, 12th, 21st, 23rd and 25th M.I. and two Bengal battalions, while a reserve brigade was warned for service from the Bombay Presidency. The Viceroy's instructions to the Commander were as follows:— "The immediate objects of the expedition are the occupation of Mandalay and the dethronement of King Thibaw; and it is extremely desirable that these objects should be attained rather by the display than the use of force." Gen. Prendergast accordingly crossed the frontier on November 15th and by the 28th of that month the King and the City of Mandalay were in his power. The advance, which was by water, met with comparatively little resistance except at the fort of Minhla, where the 12th M.I. had four officers and 26 men killed and wounded, practically the only casualties incurred at this stage. The Burmese casualties were heavy; they carried away many of their dead but 170 were buried by the British and 276 prisoners were taken. This was the

only place where anything like stubborn resistance was offered to the British advance, and with its fall the opposition of the Burmese army was practically at an end. Though this event complied with the Viceroy's instructions it had most unfortunate results, since thousands of Burmese soldiers were turned loose on the countryside, armed and unbeaten, to become the backbone of the dacoity which required several more years to suppress. Upper Burma had been in a state of anarchy prior to the British advance, and after the fall of Mandalay similar conditions prevailed for some time, as the troops available were totally insufficient to restore law and order over such a vast area, while frequent changes of the Ministry in England delayed decisions as to whether the country should be annexed. By the time that the future administration had been settled in March 1886, Burmese leaders had organized a national resistance, and owing to the monsoon military operations on a large scale had to be postponed till the cold weather. In the meantime small columns were sent out in different directions to intercept dacoit gangs.

A large part of Burma is covered with jungle, which added to the difficulties of troops trained only for open warfare, while transport problems limited the size of our columns, which seldom exceeded 100 rifles and a few cavalry or mounted infantry. Operations, though continuous and extensive, were therefore on a minor scale, a convoy ambuscaded, the defence of a small post against a sudden attack, or a hurried march to surprise a gang of dacoits who seldom stood to fight but generally fled at the first shot. Under such difficult conditions it is not surprising that regrettable incidents should occasionally occur, but there is no reason to suppose that such were more common with Madras detachments than with

troops from other Presidencies. On the other hand there are numerous records of good work by Madras troops of which the following are given as typical.

On February 13th Lieut. Dobbie and 60 sepoys 26th M.I. repulsed an attack of 200 dacoits on Taungdwingyi, killing 12 and wounding 30.

On April 27th, 1886, Col. Parson with 50 Madras Lancers and 50 sepoys 25th M.I. surrounded a village about 12 miles from Mandalay, killed six dacoits and captured 72. This capture was considered specially important.

On May 26th Capt. Hastings with 100 sepoys 25th M.I. attacked and captured a stockade near Katha held by 450 Shans, Kachins and Burmese. The stockade was rushed from three points, and the enemy fled leaving six dead and carrying off several wounded.

On June 1st a convoy of 23 carts escorted by one Naik and 10 men of the 26th M.I., proceeding from Minhla to Taungdwingyi, when passing through some jungle was attacked by about 60 dacoits. The sepoys behaved very well, having quickly got together and fired volleys into the dacoits, who fled, some nine or ten of their number being seen to drop.

On June 27th, 1886, the Lamaing post commanded by Capt. Preston with a detachment of the 12th M.I. was attacked at night by a party of Shan dacoits, some of whom got inside the work and wounded Capt. Preston; after some fighting the enemy were driven out. Casualties on our side were a Jemadar and a sepoy killed, Capt. Preston and four privates wounded.

On July 4th, 1886, Jemadar Iman Khan with 30 rifles 26th M.I. proceeding on escort duty from Taungdwingyi to Minhla, was attacked by 200 dacoits. After an hour's fighting the dacoits were driven off with a loss of 16 killed and 33 wounded.

During this period two setbacks occurred which greatly encouraged the rebels. These were the withdrawal of the Nape garrison due to sickness, and the death of Mr. Phayre, Deputy Commissioner of Minhla, during an unsuccessful attack on an enemy post; in both cases Bengal and not Madras troops were concerned.

In the meantime considerable reinforcements had arrived, including the 3rd L.I., 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 26th, 27th and 30th M.I. and in addition a large military police force recruited from North India, so that before the end of 1886 there were in the country over 24,000 troops and some 8,000 military police. The plan of operations decided on to restore law and order consisted in establishing a large number of small military posts throughout the country, while flying columns were stationed at suitable points to keep up an unrelenting pressure on the rebel leaders, and to deal with any gangs of dacoits which might enter their area. These dispositions in due time produced the desired effect, which was materially hastened by the use of mounted infantry companies and the improvement of communications due to the extension of the railway and a greatly increased steamer service of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. By the end of 1887 most of the rebel leaders had been accounted for and it was found possible to withdraw a number of Indian Infantry battalions, though several more years were to elapse before Upper Burma was completely pacified.

The 3rd Burma War terminated in 1891 with the suppression of a sudden outbreak at Wunthoo. The Sawbwa of that State, who for some years had been covertly hostile though outwardly subservient to the British, using as a pretext the passage of a British column in pursuit of some dacoits across a portion of his territory, suddenly broke into rebellion, and under a well prepared scheme attacked a number of posts simultaneously. On February 16th, 1891, rebels from Wunthoo broke into Kawlin and set fire to several buildings, but were eventually driven out by the military police. Reinforcements of police arrived on the 17th and on the 19th Lieut. Nisbett arrived from Katha with 100 men of the 20th M.I., bringing the garrison up to 180. Meanwhile other posts were being attacked, and the situation growing most serious, reinforcements were hurriedly despatched from Shwebo and Mandalay, while arrangements were made at Mandalay for an expedition on a large scale.

At Kawlin on the afternoon of the 19th the rebels made a second determined attack, assailing the town simultaneously from three sides, and the garrison was hard pressed when Capt. Keary with a small force of mounted police from Shwebo arrived most opportunely on the scene. He at once charged the dacoits who were driven off with heavy loss and the post was relieved. More of the 20th M.I. and other troops now reached Kawlin, and on the 22nd a force of about 400 attacked and defeated a large body of the enemy who had taken up a strongly entrenched position. The success of this action, and of an affair at Okkan on the same day, completely stamped out the rebellion in the south of the country within a week of its outbreak. The military operations therefore were practically over before the expeditionary force under Brig.-Gen. G. B. Wolseley was in the field.

The crushing of this serious rebellion in so short a time is an outstanding example of what can be effected by a resolute offensive against vastly superior numbers.

Throughout these years of arduous campaigning the Madras battalions had taken their full share of the work, and the official records show what useful service they rendered. They suffered far more casualties from malaria than in action with the enemy, but that was the common experience of all troops, whether British or Indian, engaged in the campaign, and they certainly earned the battle honour of *Burma 1885–87* awarded to those units which took part in these harassing operations. The Indian General Service Medal with bars *Burma 1885–87*, *Burma 1887–89* and *Burma 1889–92* was awarded to those who took part in the 3rd Burma War.

It has frequently been stated that the Madras sepoy proved unreliable in this campaign With so many small detachments of troops utterly untrained for jungle warfare, and with no experience of active service for 30 years, it is probable that some minor regrettable incidents did occur, though no record of them is to be found. But such incidents are liable to occur in any army, and there are records of their having happened in the 3rd Burma War to troops who were not Madrassis. There is no reason to suppose that the Madras sepoy, in spite of so many years of peace, proved any less reliable than his comrades from Bengal or Bombay.

In this connection Lt.-Gen. Burton writing in 1888 says :—

" There has probably been here and there an instance of slackness or unsteadiness among the many thousand men, both of Bengal and Bombay, as well as Madras, who have been employed in Burma; but the Bengal papers have taken

care to preserve silence on the laches of their own troops, but have industriously sought out and exaggerated all rumours affecting the Madrassis."

1889—96

But though Upper Burma had been pacified, the border tribes still remained to be dealt with, and some years elapsed before the Chins, Kachins and Shans were induced to submit. The operations were even more harassing than those of the previous years, on account of the mountainous nature of the terrain, but were in due course successfully completed. Space does not permit of a detailed account of the various expeditions, and it will suffice to record that between 1889 and 1892 six Madras battalions (2nd, 4th, 8th, 10th, 23rd and 32nd M.I.) were engaged in operations against the Chins and Kachins, and all appear from the official records to have done uniformly well. A detachment of the 23rd W.L.I. defended Sadon in 1892 for 13 days and nights against almost continuous attacks.

The 13th M.I. also were employed in the Chin Hills in 1896 on punitive operations, which were carried out successfully and with credit to the Regiment. The same battalion had been called upon to send 150 rifles at very short notice to suppress a Moplah rising in Malabar in 1894. Setting out immediately, the detachment covered 38 miles by road and 20 by boat in 36 consecutive hours, but unfortunately arrived too late, as the rebels had been wiped out by a detachment of the 1st Dorset Regiment.

1897—98

In 1897 trouble broke out on the North-West Frontier, and in September two divisions were mobilized for the

invasion of the Tirah. In addition to Sappers and Miners, Madras was represented by one unit only, the 21st Pioneers, which saw a considerable amount of service before operations terminated in April 1898. The Regiment earned special commendation for " great coolness and staunchness " while acting as rearguard to the column withdrawing from Burg on December 28th, 1897, and behind the terse official notice lies a story. The 21st Pioneers, who had been largely employed as Corps troops and felt that they had not had their fair share of fighting, had petitioned to be given a more active role, and the General agreed to their doing rearguard on the date in question. After the destruction of Burg, the enemy, having as usual collected on the hills all round, closely followed the rearguard as soon as the picquets were withdrawn. Knowing that they were faced by a Madras regiment they thought the opportunity too good to be missed and closed in on the 21st with a recklessness which they had at no time previously displayed. But the Madras Pioneers stood firm and inflicted on the tribesmen heavier casualties than any which they had sustained to date. That a Madras regiment with so little experience of mountain warfare could do so well is proof of what the Madras sepoy is capable of under good officers.

It is also worth noting that the 21st Pioneers, in spite of the intense cold, were one of the healthiest battalions engaged in these operations.

Meanwhile two other Madras units, the 6th and 20th M.I. were moved up to the Tochi in 1898 but unfortunately were too late to participate in any fighting.

For this campaign the 21st Pioneers were granted the battle honour *Tirah-Punjab Frontier*, and all ranks received the Indian General Service Medal with three bars.

1900—13

In 1900, in conjunction with other Allied Powers, a China Expeditionary Force was despatched from India for the relief of the Pekin Legations which were besieged by the Boxers. Operations having been brought to a successful conclusion the troops returned to India early in 1901. Madras troops taking part in this short campaign were the 1st M.Ps., 3rd P.L.I. and 28th M.I.

In 1905 the establishment of the remaining Carnatic battalions was reduced to 600, but in spite of this severe handicap most of them were able to satisfy their annual inspecting officers that they were fit for service.

In 1911 the 79th C.I. (formerly 19th M.I.) was selected for duty in the Persian Gulf in connection with the suppression of gun-running, and a minor incident showed that the Madras sepoy had lost none of his fighting qualities through so many years of peace. A mutinous Persian regiment some 500 strong advanced on the British Consulate at Shiraz on June 10th and endeavoured to force the main gate, which was held by a guard of a Lance Naik and three privates of the 79th C.I. Every effort of persuasion having failed to stop the Persians, and fire having been opened by them, the Lance Naik ordered a burst of rapid fire and followed it up with the bayonet, on which the Persians fled. All four members of the guard received the I.D.S.M. for their gallant conduct in this little affair.

1914—32

Considerations of space preclude even an outline of the world-wide operations which took place during these years and it must suffice to record briefly the services rendered by Madras regiments in the various theatres of war.

On the outbreak of war the 61st Prs. and 63rd P.L.I. were detailed to form part of the expeditionary force to E. Africa. The 61st, being at full strength, had little difficulty in mobilising, but the 63rd, being on the reduced establishment of 600, had to indent for 400 men from its linked battalion to reach its full complement, while British officers from five different units had to be posted to complete to field service scale. The force left Bombay on October 16th, 1914, and arrived off Tanga on November 2nd. The 61st was one of the first units to land and took its full share of the heavy fighting on the 3rd, when it lost four officers and 57 men killed and 22 wounded. On the following day the remainder of the force having landed, the offensive was resumed and the 61st was engaged throughout the day, suffering 38 more casualties. It is worth recording that when the regiment in front broke back through the 61st the latter stood firm; finally in accordance with orders it retired at midnight and re-embarked on the following day. Meanwhile the 63rd P.L.I. whose component parts had never paraded together and whose officers were mostly unknown to the men, soon after landing had been carried away by a panic-stricken regiment in front breaking through them, and this regrettable incident has been remembered while it is forgotten that the 61st Pioneers was the steadiest of all the Indian battalions present at this action. During the next three years the 61st was employed chiefly on Pioneer work during the E. African campaign, while the 63rd carried out garrison duties.

Another Madras unit, the 75th C.I., was on service at Aden from April 1916 to December 1920. It had several sharp brushes with the enemy, notably on 7th December 1916 when Jabri was attacked at dawn and captured, the regiment having 9 men killed and 6 officers and 36 men wounded;

and at Handley Hill on October 3rd, 1918, when a premature withdrawal of our cavalry enabled the enemy to get round the flanks during the retirement. The 75th were closely engaged in thick brush for an hour but by repeated bayonet charges and steady withdrawals 100 yards at a time were able to extricate themselves with a loss of 1 B.O. and 18 I.O.Rs. killed and 2 officers and 29 men wounded. After the Armistice the Turkish Commander admitted that his men feared the 75th C.I. more than any other Indian battalions " because they were not afraid to go in with the bayonet "—high praise indeed.

During 1915 the 81st Pioneers was actively employed on the N.W. Frontier of India and saw a good deal of fighting. It was specially commended, with the Guides, for a rear-guard action covering a withdrawal to camp when numbers of British soldiers collapsed from heatstroke and had to be carried in. The day's action was a particularly strenuous one covering 24 miles out and back.

The 81st was again employed during the Marri operations in March and April 1918.

In 1915 the 64th Pioneers was engaged in suppressing a Kachin rising in Upper Burma, during which two N.C.Os. received the I.D.S.M., and in the following year it proceeded to Mesopotamia, disembarking at Basra on 1st March 1916. It was continuously employed until the Armistice, chiefly on Pioneer work, but sustained a number of casualties in the Hai Salient. In 1919 the Regiment proceeded to Kermanshah, where it was employed on L of C duties and it is recorded that the men stood up very well to the intense winter cold. In April 1920 it proceeded to Hamadan where it carried out garrison duty till it returned to India in 1921, after an absence of five years.

Other Madras regiments which took part in the Mesopotamian campaign were the 73rd, 79th, 80th and 88th C.I., 83rd W.L.I. and 1/156th Infantry; but up to the time of the Armistice none of these units was given any share of active service, being restricted to garrison duties at the Base and on the Lines of Communication.

In November, 1919 the 80th C.I. joined the 51st Brigade of the 17th Division and after taking part in the operations in Kurdistan saw a considerable amount of fighting during the Arab rebellion in Iraq in 1920, one of their Subadars winning a Military Cross while seven V.C.Os. and I.O.Rs. received the I.D.S.M.

Other Madras units engaged in this theatre during 1919–1920 were the 63rd P.L.I. (Iraq), 79th C.I. (N.W. Persia and Iraq), 81st Pioneers (S.Persia), 83rd W.L.I. (Iraq) and 86th C.I. (Iraq).

Meanwhile the 3rd Afghan War had broken out on May 6th, 1919, and four Madras battalions (1/61st, 2/61st, 1/81st, and 2/81st Pioneers) formed part of the field force employed against the Afghans and the tribes who rallied to their support. Peace with Afghanistan was signed on August 8th, 1919, but further operations involving considerable fighting took place in Waziristan between 1919 and 1924. In addition to the above-mentioned units the 64th Pioneers and the 73rd C.I. also were actively engaged in the same theatre. The 73rd C.I. was specially sent to the North-West Frontier to be tried out and again proved that a Madras battalion well trained and under good officers can stand comparison with any others in the Indian army.

In August, 1921, a Moplah rebellion broke out in Malabar, and a considerable force had to be assembled to deal with

the situation. Several severe engagements were fought, but the operations consisted mostly of jungle warfare reminiscent of the Burma campaigns. Detachments of the 64th Pioneers and 83rd W.L.I. were engaged and acquitted themselves well in action with the rebels.

Only one item remains to be chronicled, the Burma rebellion of 1931–32 in which the 2nd Battalion Corps of Madras Pioneers (formerly 61st) was engaged principally on Pioneer work, receiving special commendation for its services.

CHAPTER III

Historic Actions

Chengam—3rd of September 1767

Col. Smith with 800 European infantry, six Sepoy battalions and sixteen guns was withdrawing before the vastly superior forces of Haidar Ali and the Nizam to effect a junction with Col. Wood's detachment at Tiruvannamalai. The day's march traversed a defile between hills near the village of Chengam (North Arcot district) with a fordable river crossing the road obliquely at its entrance. The order of march was first a battalion of sepoys, then the baggage protected by another sepoy battalion on either flank, while at a short distance behind the main body followed, with the flank companies forming the rearguard. At the entrance of the defile was a village, and south-west of it a hill commanding the pass, both of which were already occupied by the Nizam's troops. The 4th M.I., which was leading, cleared the village at the point of the bayonet, and then drove the

enemy off the hill. Haidar in the meantime, realizing the importance of this strong point, moved towards it with his main army, but his approach being observed, Col. Smith quickly reinforced the 4th M.I. with his main body and confronted Haidar, who saw too late his mistake in not forestalling the British. Nevertheless he made several determined attacks in mass, himself on foot at the head of his best troops, to dislodge the Madras battalions, and suffered enormous losses, his killed alone being estimated at 2,000 while he himself was slightly wounded. Foiled in their attempt to take the hill, the enemy now kept up a heavy but ill-aimed fire of musketry and guns, and made a further endeavour to break through the line by working through the woods on their flank, but without success.

Meanwhile the British rearguard had been long delayed by the last two guns, which had been attacked by the enemy when crossing the river. On its arrival and junction with the main body the whole line, led by the Grenadier battalion, which as was usual at that time had been formed by taking the two flank companies from each of the six battalions present, moved forward and completely routed the immense army of the confederates. The enemy was pursued till sunset and abandoned two guns, which however Col. Smith was unable to carry off.

In this battle the Madras army really received its baptism of fire, as though it had been engaged in minor operations for some years previous, it was not until now that it was called upon, not only to fight but to manœuvre as a disciplined force, and as Wilson justly points out, in this and the succeeding action at Tiruvannamalai the close fighting was done entirely by the sepoys.

Madras battalions engaged at Chengam were :—The 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and 7th M.I. and the 13th Circar battalion which was reduced in 1785; they are represented in the Indian army today only by 1/1st and 1/2nd Punjab regiment as lineal descendants of the 2nd and 7th M.I.

Tiruvannamalai—26th of September 1767

After the battle of Chengam Col. Smith effected his junction with Col. Wood and their combined forces now amounted to 1,400 Europeans, 9,000 sepoys and 34 guns. But the British were in great difficulties for supplies, and the confederates, fully aware of this, determined to wait till their enemy was weakened by want and then attack. This plan was however frustrated by fortunate finds of buried hoards of grain, and the Nizam, wearied of inaction, insisted on assuming the offensive. On September 26th a strong force of the enemy took up a position in front of Col. Smith's left, on which a cannonade was opened. Haidar hoped that the British would move forward and become entangled in an impassable swamp which lay between the opposing forces, but Col. Smith, realizing the situation, moved to the right to outflank the enemy's left, where a hill offered a favourable strong point. The direction in which Col. Smith was now moving led the enemy to believe that he was retreating on Arcot and they moved hastily forward to fall upon his flanks and rear. To their mutual surprise the two forces suddenly met on rounding the hill, which a sepoy battalion at once seized, driving the enemy from its summit before they could occupy it in force. A large body of the enemy's best infantry now moved forward to occupy a strong position among some rocks in front of the British line of advance, but before they could effect this three sepoy battalions, who were much

inferior to the enemy in numbers, were pushed forward and in Col. Smith's words, " advanced with such rapidity and gave so brisk a fire that the enemy's sepoys could not stand it but were obliged to quit their posts and run."

The British line now deployed opposite the main masses of the enemy which, formed into a huge crescent, seemed about to envelop the small British force. But the tremendous disparity in numbers did not shake the courage of the sepoy battalions and, again quoting Col. Smith, " did not prevent our men from marching on with a firmness that will ever do them honour, for notwithstanding all efforts from cannon, musketry, rockets and horse, they could not discompose our lines."

The steady fire and firm advance of the British was so effective that Haidar, who realized that the battle was lost, withdrew his cannon and at length persuaded the Nizam to do the same. Darkness now fell and the British were obliged to halt, having driven the enemy from the ground and captured nine cannon. At daybreak on the 27th Col. Smith again advanced, and finding the enemy in full retreat followed them up as rapidly as possible, soon converting the retreat into a rout, during which no less than 55 more guns were captured. The operations of the day ended only when the troops were exhausted and Col. Smith was unable to continue the pursuit further owing to lack of supplies and transport, of which as usual he was deficient. In this important victory the enemy lost some 4,000 men together with 64 guns and a large quantity of stores, while the British casualties amounted to only 150 killed and wounded. One of the first results of this victory was the hasty withdrawal of Tipu Sultan, then plundering the outskirts of Madras.

The following extract from Col. Smith's despatches testified to the gallantry with which this action was fought and shows that the disciplined valour of the Madras sepoy, first displayed at Chengam, was now firmly established :—
" Your officers of the sepoys and their battalions deserve more praise than I can express, for I never saw men behave with more resolution and intrepidity than those I have the honour to command. The 3rd Battalion behaved with great steadiness, facing the enemy's horse at 60 paces with shouldered arms; notwithstanding such large bodies of horse surrounding us on all sides, no consideration could restrain our sepoys from rushing on the enemy with an impetuosity that waited not for guns but only thought of joining and charging Haidar Ali's sepoys."

The Madras battalions which took part in this action were the same as at Chengam, with the addition of the 6th and 9th M.I. and the 11th Battalion (reduced in 1769). The 6th and 9th M.I. are now represented by the 2/1st and 2/2nd Punjab Regiment.

Porto Novo—1st of July 1781

Early in the morning of July 1st the small British force, mustering only some 7,600 men, left its camp and was drawn up in two lines facing almost due north, while the 21st Carnatic battalion with some details comprised the baggage guard on the flank next to the sea. The first line consisted of the 73rd Foot, Madras and Bengal Europeans, the 2nd, 4th, 9th, 14th and 15th Carnatic battalions, the 1st and 2nd Nawab's cavalry and 30 guns while in the second line were the 16th, 17th, 18th and 20th Carnatic battalions and 26 guns. The ground consisted of sand hills intersected by deep nullahs,

and the enemy had placed a masked battery on every hillock covering the road to Cuddalore, while the plain was covered by large bodies of cavalry. Sir Eyre Coote, who was ignorant of the exact nature and whereabouts of Haidar's position, advanced about one and a half miles up the road and then halted to carry out a personal reconnaissance. During the hour which this lasted the British force was subjected to an incessant cannonade from the front and left flank to which our guns were forbidden to reply owing to the necessity for conserving what little ammunition there was for decisive action. At 9 a.m. the General had come to a decision, and without any preliminary movement which could advise the enemy of his intention, rapidly marched to the right in column covered by a line of sandhills, until he reached an opening in them where a road was found, which had been constructed by Haidar for the movement of his guns. A commanding rise which Haidar had neglected to guard was occupied and the first line, clearing the passage through the sandhills and driving back a strong corps of the enemy, deployed in battle order facing west. It then halted under a heavy cannonade until the sandhills behind were in possession of the guns of the second line, when it moved rapidly forward. Meanwhile Haidar's artillery, as usual magnificently " horsed " by his famous breed of Mysore bullocks, had been withdrawn from its original position to a new line at right angles to it and barring the British advance. Here it opened a tramendous cannonade, but in spite of this the British first line advanced steadily making skilful use of every advantage of ground. While the first line was thus advancing the second was attacked in a most determined manner by a large force of infantry supported by cavalry and guns, and a severe struggle ensued in which the second line, which consisted

only of sepoy battalions, eventually triumphed after repulsing three fierce attacks. Munro states the enemy came on with such resolution at this point that Capt. Moorhouse of the artillery actually melted a brass 6 pr. Gun by the rapidity of his discharges of grape.

Becoming impatient at this stubborn resistance, Haidar ordered a desperate charge of his whole cavalry, some 40,000 strong, on both lines simultaneously, but without any better success, and by 4 p.m. the British had forced the enemy line and compelled it to a precipitate retreat. Haidar now saw that all was over and ordered a general withdrawal, which his army lost no time in carrying out. The victory could not unfortunately be made decisive owing to the lack of cavalry and the exhaustion of the army. On this brilliant day a British force of three European and ten Sepoy battalions with 55 guns overthrew an army which certainly numbered 80,000 and possibly more, including in its ranks 600 Europeans and 23 regular sepoy battalions; only in artillery was Haidar slightly outmatched. The casualties on our side were small, thanks to Coote's manœuvring, while a moderate computation fixes the losses in Haidar's densely packed masses at 4,000 killed and many more wounded. In his despatches after the action Coote wrote :—" The spirited behaviour of our Sepoy corps did them the greatest credit. No Europeans could be steadier; they were emulous of being foremost on every service it was necessary to undertake." The Madras battalions present at this action were the 2nd, 4th, 9th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 19th and 20th M.I. Existing battalions of the 3rd Madras Regiment representing the above are the 2nd (15th M.I.), 3rd (19th M.I.) and 6th (20th M.I.).

Sholinghur—27th of September 1781

On the morning of September 27th Sir Eyre Coote, who had camped the previous day near the foot of the Sholinghur hill (North Arcot district) went forward to reconnoitre, and finding a long ridge of rocks held by the enemy ordered up the 2nd Brigade which quickly dislodged them. He now saw Haidar's whole army some three miles to the south, and at once sent orders to call up the remainder of his force, leaving the baggage with a suitable escort near the hills. Advancing over the ridge the army turned to the right in file, Coote's intention being that the leading brigade should work round Haidar's left flank. The main body halted as soon as it had come opposite the centre of the enemy's line and faced left with the rear battalions formed in echelon to protect the left flank from the large bodies of hostile cavalry which were swarming over the plain. The ground between the opposing forces was comparatively open, but irregular ridges and groups of rocks afforded good cover to both armies. Haidar had been completely surprised, not expecting Coote to move forward until the following day, and under the circumstances decided to act on the defensive until the confusion caused by the surprise had been remedied. In the meantime Coote's leading brigade in its turning movement encounted a tank, and in working round this moved further to the right than had been intended, and consequently a considerable gap developed between the two portions of the British force. Haidar seized this opportunity to pour in a tremendous fire from every gun which he could bring to bear on the British main body, but undeterred by the heavy cannonade the British line advanced to close with the enemy. The broken nature of the ground resulted in gaps in the main line which offered to the enemy's cavalry opportunities of which they

were quick to avail themselves, charging with the greatest determination, but without being able to make any impression. It was at this period that Haidar Ali's household cavalry made a desperate attempt on the 18th and 21st Carnatic battalions, which had temporarily lost touch with the remainder of the force, but the sepoys stood firm and received the enemy with such a heavy fire that they swung off and passed between the intervals, receiving a further volley from the rear ranks which had faced about for the purpose. Here the 21st Battalion (20th M.I.) captured the leading cavalry standard, to carry which as an Honorary Third Colour Sir Eyre Coote added an extra Jemadar to their establishment.

These charges by the cavalry, though all repulsed, had given Haidar time to withdraw his guns, all of which were got off except one which was captured. The 2nd Brigade, having now gained the left flank of the enemy's position, brought their guns to bear with effect on the retreating columns, and an attempt on the baggage guard by a large force of cavalry and infantry also having failed, the British were left masters of the field and encamped on the ground previously occupied by the enemy. The strength of the British army in this battle was 11,500 of whom 1,500 were Europeans. Haidar's whole army estimated by Sir Eyre Coote at 150,000 with 70 guns was present and the Mysoreans admit that it was a severe defeat in which their loss probably exceeded 5,000 men. As usual Sir Eyre Coote was unable to follow up his victory for want of cavalry and supplies, and after the action he wrote that he would gladly exchange the trophies he had won for 5 days' supply of rice. Owing to rebrigading before the action it is difficult to determine with accuracy all the Madras battalions engaged, but these

certainly included the 3rd, 4th, 6th, 9th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 19th and 20th M.I. now represented by the following battalions of the 3rd Madras Regiment:—2nd (15th M.I.), 3rd (19th M.I.), 5th (3rd L.I.), and 6th (20th M.I.). The battle honour *Sholinghur* was at first bestowed only on the 20th M.I. but later all corps engaged in this action received it.

In his despatches Sir Eyre Coote wrote:—" The 21st battalion of sepoys received my thanks in general orders on account of taking one of the enemy's standards. I have ordered that a Jemadar be added to the establishment of that corps for the purpose of carrying it." The battalion mentioned later became the 80th C.I. and carried this Third Honorary Colour up to the time of its disbandment in 1921; the Colour now rests in the Royal United Service Institute at Whitehall.

Assaye—23rd of September 1803

About 1 p.m. on September 3rd, 1803, the British troops came in sight of the armies of Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar drawn up in order of battle behind the river Kelna. Their force amounted to 20,000 cavalry, 18 battalions of regular infantry under European officers, totalling 12,000 men, and upwards of 100 guns, to engage which Gen. Wellesley could not dispose more than 6,000. The General resolved to attack the left and crossed the river a short distance above its confluence with another stream called the Juah, which ran behind the enemy's present position. The passage of the river was not disputed, though the fire of the enemy's excellent artillery already began to take toll, and the British force

formed across the fork between the two rivers in two lines with the cavalry in the rear. The first line was composed of H.M.'s 78th on the left, the 10th and 8th M.I. in the centre, four twelve-pounder guns and the pickets (details of each corps forming the advance guard) on the right. The second line, 300 yards behind, consisted of the 4th and 24th M.I., with H.M.'s 74th on the right immediately in rear of the pickets; the third line was composed of H.M.'s 19th Dragoons and the 4th, 5th and 7th Madras cavalry. Meanwhile the enemy had changed front, throwing their left on the Juah at the village of Assaye and resting their right upon the Kelna. Their line was defended by upwards of 100 guns, some of which were disposed in front of the village of Assaye, which was occupied by a strong body of infantry. The British troops advanced with great steadiness under a remarkably heavy fire, but the commander of the pickets, who had been directed to keep out of shot from Assaye, mistook his orders, diverged to the right and led directly upon that village, followed by the 74th from the second line. The consequence was that not only did the pickets and the 74th suffer severe losses from the village, but they were charged by the enemy's cavalry headed by Sindhia in person on their left flank, through the break in the line which had been caused by the divergence of the pickets. Fortunately before irretrievable damage could be done our cavalry came up from the rear, defeated the enemy's horse and chased them back to their own lines, though in doing so they suffered such casualties in men and horses that they were unfit for a close pursuit at the end of the day. The 78th with the Madras battalions of both lines advancing at the same time drove the enemy from their guns with the bayonet. Most of the gunners were killed at their posts but some threw themselves down

and feigned death until the British line had passed when they turned their pieces round and fired into the British rear until disposed of by the cavalry. The British line, still advancing, then attacked and carried a second position which had been taken up on the Juah at right angles to the first. Several of the enemy's battalions now gave way entirely and fled, but others retired in good order until charged and broken by the cavalry.

The enemy left 102 guns on the field and it was long before the remains of the defeated army could be reformed as a fighting force.

Thus terminated the battle of Assaye, the first victory gained by the future Duke of Wellington, in which he commanded in chief, and one of the most decisive as well as most desperate ever fought in India. The British loss was very heavy, viz., 198 Europeans and 230 Sepoys killed, 442 Europeans and 696 Sepoys wounded and 4 Europeans and 15 Sepoys missing, a total of 1,584 from a force which did not exceed 6,000. The loss of the enemy was computed by themselves at 1,200 killed and 4,800 wounded.

The following extracts from Wellington's correspondence show how highly he thought of his troops :—

"I cannot write in too strong terms of the conduct of the troops. They advanced in the best order and with the greatest steadiness under a most destructive fire, against a body of infantry far superior in number, who appeared determined to contend with them to the last and who were driven from their guns only by the bayonet; and notwithstanding the numbers of the enemy's cavalry and the repeated demonstrations they made of an intention to charge, they were kept at a distance by our infantry."

" Their infantry is the best I have ever seen in India excepting our own; and they and their equipments far surpass Tipu's. I assure you that their fire was so heavy that I much doubted at one time whether I should be able to induce our troops to advance, and all agree that the battle was the fiercest that has ever been seen in India. Our troops behaved admirably. Our sepoys astonished me."

The troops were thanked by the Governor-General in Council and honorary Colours were ordered to be presented to each regiment engaged, who were also permitted to bear the word *Assaye* with the device of the Elephant on their Colours and appointments.

Madras battalions engaged were the 2nd, 4th, 8th, 10th and 24th M.I., none of which survive today as Madras units.

The anniversary of this victory was celebrated by Madras regiments for over one hundred years and it was a fortunate chance which enabled the Colours of the old 10/3rd Madras Regiment to be presented to the newly formed Training Centre of the 3rd Madras Regiment on the same date in 1942.

Seetabuldee—26th/27th of November 1817

The Residency at Nagpore was on the west of the city from which it was separated by the two hills of Seetabuldee. These small knolls were only about 100 feet high and some 300 yards apart, the summits being level but of small extent. The Resident, considering it expedient to anticipate any attempt on these hills, directed the O.C. troops to occupy them, which was done on November 25th. The 1/24th M.N.I. with one six-pounder was posted on the smaller hill, while the 1/20th M.N.I. with three six-pounders held the larger. On the evening of the 26th the Rajah's forces attacked both hills

and the action continued incessantly till noon on the following day, the Arabs making repeated and determined attacks on both hills, coming close up to the guns. Throughout the night the action continued and the enemy were each time repulsed with heavy loss, but about 8 a.m. on the 27th the smaller hill was carried by an overwhelming rush of the enemy's swordsmen in consequence of the loss and fatigue which the defenders had sustained. At this critical moment the fortune of the day was retrieved by Capt. Fitzgerald who with three troops of Bengal cavalry and the Madras Bodyguard made a most determined charge upon a large body of the enemy's cavalry which was drawn up on the plain near the foot of the hills, utterly routed and dispersed them and took the guns which were firing on the hills. This brilliant charge greatly encouraged the defenders, and a tumbril on the small hill happening to blow up in the midst of the Arabs, our men headed by the 1/24th rushed forward and recovered the lost position, driving the Arabs down the hill and capturing two small guns which they had brought up. Shortly afterwards the enemy, who had again assembled in considerable numbers in front of the small hill, were for the second time charged by the cavalry and put to flight. A great many were killed and from that moment the assailants appeared to lose heart; their fire began to slacken and by noon it had entirely ceased.

The conduct of the troops of all arms throughout this long and severe conflict was marked by great courage and endurance, and in recognition of it the corps engaged were permitted to bear the word *Seetabuldee* on their Colours and appointments,* while the 1/24th, which had been involved in the mutiny at Vellore in 1806, was at the request of the Indian ranks restored to its former position in the army and again

resumed its place at the 1/1st Regiment M.N.I. The casualties in this hotly contested action were heavy, viz., 121 killed and 239 wounded, including 17 officers killed and wounded. The Rajah's forces were estimated at 12,000 cavalry, 8,000 infantry and 35 guns, but not all of these took part in the action and their losses are unknown.

The 1/24th and 1/20th M.N.I. later became the 1st and 39th M.I. of which the former survived as the 1st Battalion corps of Madras Pioneers until it was disbanded in 1933, the anniversary of the action being observed annually.

Maheidpoor—21st of December 1817

Holkar's army was drawn up in a strong position on the far side of the river Supra. Their first line, about 750 yards from the river, was composed of ten battalions of regular infantry with some 50 guns disposed in a semi-circular form along their front. Their right rested on a ravine and their left on a bend of the river which was not fordable at that point. The key to the position was a ruined village near the centre filled with infantry and flanked by artillery. Part of their cavalry was behind the line of infantry, but the great mass was disposed on the right flank with guns and match-lock men in their front. The British force consisted of a little over 6,000 men of whom only 575 were Europeans, with eighteen 6 pr. guns and some Mysore Horse. Some time having been spent in reconnaissance, four companies, 1/16th M.N.I., supported by Horse Artillery, were pushed forward to clear the ford, which was done, though not without loss. The troops then crossed by successive brigades and deployed into line facing the enemy. This took time, and under the heavy and accurate fire of the enemy's guns, which quickly silenced our light Horse artillery pieces, considerable casualties

were sustained. The line having been formed the order was given to advance, the Light Brigade commencing the action by attacking the centre of the enemy, while the 1st brigade was advancing against their left. The ruined village was carried by the 1/3rd and 1/16th and the battery on the right centre by four companies of the Madras Rifles. The guns on the enemy's left were taken by the 1st Brigade, most of the Pathan gunners standing to be bayoneted, but their infantry offered less resistance and were quickly driven from their position. The enemy's guns were well served and laid, the gunners depressing them as the troops advanced and pouring in a very heavy fire of grape and chain shot. Meanwhile the 2nd Brigade on the left had advanced with the object of turning the enemy's right, but before it could reach their line our cavalry charged in two bodies, completely routed the enemy's horse and captured most of the guns. A body of infantry in the centre with some 20 guns still held their ground, but gave way on the approach of the 2nd Brigade, the gunners alone standing to the last. The defeat in all parts of the field was now complete and the pursuit was taken up by the cavalry. The loss to the enemy, which was estimated at 2,500, was sustained almost exclusively by their infantry and gunners. Our casualties, most of which were occasioned by artillery fire upon our advancing infantry, more especially upon that of the Light Brigade, amounted to 174 killed and 604 wounded. The number of European troops engaged having been small, the Light and 2nd Brigades were composed exclusively of sepoys, all of whom behaved with great bravery and resolution, charging up to the muzzles of the guns without hesitation, conduct which was duly appreciated by the Governor-General and by the Commander-in-Chief. The troops engaged were afterwards granted

permission to bear the word *Maheidpoor* on their Colours and appointments. Madras Battalions which took part in this soldiers' battle, the last which the Madras army was to fight as such, were the Rifle Corps, 3rd and 31st L.I., 14th, 27th and 28th M.I., of which the 63 P.L.I. and the 88th C.I. survived till 1921 and are now represented by the 5/3rd and 7/3rd Madras Regiment. The anniversary of this victory was observed regularly by the Madras corps engaged.

Kemmendine—1st to 9th of December 1824

The garrison of Kemmendine consisted of a detachment of Madras Artillery with two 6 pr. guns and one 12 pr. carronade, 58 N.C.Os. and men, 1st Madras European Regiment under Capt. Page, 48th M.I., the 26th Madras Infantry under Major Yates, and 22 Madras Pioneers.

The stockaded post was quadrangular and closely surrounded by dense jungle on all sides except one, which was almost washed by the river.

The first attack came about 4 a.m. on December 1st when a mass of fire-rafts came downstream and forced the H.E.I.C. cruiser to withdraw below the stockade. The fire-rafts were followed by a large fleet of war-boats, but these were driven off by the guns which had been so disposed as to guard the river front. Meanwhile the enemy on shore collected all round the stockade and made several determined attempts to escalade during the day, but were repulsed with heavy loss. They however entrenched themselves within a short distance, and at 8 p.m. again attacked simultaneously on all three sides. Approaching in silence they were not fired on until within thirty yards; the attack was persisted in for some time, and many had gained the foot of the stockade before they were

driven back by the continuous and well directed musketry of the garrison. Throughout that night and for the remainder of the siege the enemy kept up an incessant and galling fire by day and night. Up to the afternoon of the 2nd the war boats were kept off by the steady and well aimed fire of the guns, but matters were becoming critical when about 2 p.m. H.M.S. "Arachne" came up with a gun brig and two gunboats. This seasonable aid enabled Major Yates to withdraw a number of his men from the river front and to strengthen other parts of the post where they were much required. The same night a party of fifty of the 1st Europeans arrived to replace casualties, and on the following morning a sortie was attempted against a small gun which the Burmese had planted within fifty yards of the stockade; but though the gun was captured the enemy soon rallied and their overwhelming numbers prevented it from being carried off.

During the 4th and 5th more entrenchments and batteries were constructed by the Burmese, who kept up a heavy fire the whole time, and on the evening of the latter day, having been joined by considerable reinforcements, they renewed the attempt to escalade the southern and eastern faces but were again repulsed. Attacks on the water front being foiled by the fire of the ships, the enemy on the 7th launched two vigorous assaults in great strength on the three land faces of the stockade but with equal lack of success. Their extremely heavy losses now began to tell and their efforts to slacken, and about 4 a.m. on the 9th they abandoned their entrenchments and retired.

No one took off his clothes during the siege and every sick or wounded man, European or Indian, who was able to carry a musket continued to take part in the defence.

The 26th M.I. were awarded the unique battle honour *Kemmendine* "as a perpetual record of their distinguished and persevering gallantry on that occasion." Kemmendine Day was celebrated by the 86th C.I. till it was disbanded in 1926, and the commemoration now devolves upon the Training Centre 3rd Madras Regiment.

CHAPTER IV

THE MADRAS SEPOY

Having seen how the Madras Army was formed and having followed its war services over a period of nearly 200 years, it is logical to enquire into its composition and recruitment. But first it is necessary to dispel once and for all the totally erroneous idea which has unfortunately gained much credence in the Punjab that Madras Regiments were formed on nuclei of men from Northern India and that they were very largely recruited from the same source. This malicious libel, for such it is, was started in North India about 1903, at a time when a number of Madras Regiments were being reconstituted into Punjabis and the newly formed units were permitted to take over the battle honours and devices which had been won by their Madras predecessors.

There is not the slightest foundation for this story, which both contemporary accounts of the early wars and the old muster rolls prove to be absolutely untrue. From the beginning of their history the Madras Regiments were almost entirely composed of men born and bred in South India, and the proportion of those enlisted outside the Presidency seldom exceeded 5 per cent and was generally far less. It was natural that units serving 1,000 miles or more from the

Carnatic in those days of intolerably slow communications, when a draft might take months to arrive, should take any suitable men that offered to replace casualties, and this accounts for the great majority of such enlistments, but they were far too small to affect in any way the normal composition of the Madras units.

The idea that Madras battalions were formed on nuclei of upcountry men is equally without foundation. The first battalions were formed from independent companies which were locally enlisted and had been in existence for some years. As fresh battalions were raised they were formed on nuclei of drafts from existing battalions, as may be verified by reference to the orders of formation and early Army Lists.

In any case martial qualities are not the monopoly of North India. Constant warfare had been going on for centuries all over the South and had produced a class of soldier not only courageous but also enterprising. The Pandyas from Madura had overrun Ceylon and retained possession of it for several centuries; the Pallavas with overseas expeditionary forces had conquered Malaya, Java and other adjacent countries; while the great Telugu Kingdom of Vijianagar had withstood Muhammadan expansion to the south for nearly 300 years till overwhelmed by the five Musalman confederate kings at the battle of Talikota in 1565.

Good fighting material was most certainly available in the South, but for the first hundred years of its existence the English settlement at Madras preferred to rely for its protection on a small mixed force of Europeans, half-caste Portuguese and Africans, the reason probably being that as strangers in a foreign land the Company felt that more reliance could be placed on the fidelity of soldiers who also were alien.

To the French must be ascribed the honour of first realizing the value of local troops; they raised a force of 5,000 in 1739 and with this example before their eyes the English Company took similar steps a few years later.

Exactly what classes of men were enlisted into the Madras battalions in the early days can be ascertained from contemporary authors and records.

The following extracts bear on the subject:—

"From the proceedings of Government, dated 7th May 1770, it appears that the Sepoy battalions then consisted of Mohamedans, Tamils and Telugus, but no details of caste are given. It may be inferred that the number of Brahmans, Rajputs and Mahrattas in the Madras Army was very small. It is clear that the authorities were desirous of restricting enlistments to men of good caste, but it is equally clear that this was not practicable during the last (18th) century."

Capt. Innes Munro writing in 1789 referring to the boys who carried the knapsacks of the European soldiers on the march and who cooked for them in camp, says: "These boys are amazingly attached to their masters and will keep close to their heels in the midst of the greatest dangers. When they grow up they make the best sepoys, for all of them speak English well."

Capt. R. Gold writing about 1791 says: "Though the Coast sepoys are frequently of small stature, they have a very soldier-like appearance, and from the high state of perfection their officers have brought them to, by a strict discipline and a study to make their lives comfortable, they appear really attached to the service."

In 1795, owing to the small pay of the sepoy and the high price of rice, considerable difficulty was experienced in

obtaining good recruits, and the battalions were kept up to their proper strength by accepting undersized men and those of low caste. An attempt was made to obtain recruits from Bengal, but desertions were so numerous that the Supreme Government directed the experiment to be abandoned. Similar attempts in Bombay met with equal lack of success. It appears however from a minute written by Gen. Harris early in 1798 that the difficulty in procuring eligible recruits in the Carnatic had then begun to diminish, since he writes: "Although the men obtained in the more southern countries are much inferior to the northern recruits in caste, size and appearance, they are nevertheless hardy and thrifty, and being less subject to local attachments and little encumbered with religious habits or prejudices to interfere with the regular performance of their duty, are found to stand the pressure of military hardships with much fortitude and to manifest at all times a firm adherence to the service."

A further reference in 1818 on the subject of recruiting in Hindustan for the Madras Army elicited the following reply from the Adjutant-General in Bengal: "The men who would enter the ranks of the Madras Army from Hindustan are generally those who have no ties behind, have committed some act for which they are in disgrace with their kindred or amenable to our laws, or wish to escape from the debts they have contracted—in short all those of desperate fortunes and who for fear of detection are unwilling to enter our battalions."

Writing in 1823 Sir John Philippart says: "The infantry sepoy of Madras is rather a small man, but he is of active make, and capable of undergoing great fatigue upon a very slender diet. We find no man arrive at a greater precision in all his military exercises; his moderation, his

sobriety and his patience give him a steadiness that is almost unknown to Europeans; but although there exists in this body of men a fitness to attain mechanical perfection as soldiers, there are no men whose mind it is of more consequence to study." The last sentence deserves special emphasis, since in it will be found the key to the Madras sepoy's devotion to those officers whom he knows to take an interest in his welfare, and to the maintenance of discipline in a Madras unit.

Col. Welsh writing in 1830 says that the Madras Army was composed of Musulmans, Rajputs to a very limited extent, Gentoos (Telugus), Tamils and Pariahs (Adi-Dravidas) and regrets that of recent years the latter class, "brave, active and attached as they were to their officers and the service, have of late years been excluded from the line, in order more fully to conciliate the higher classes." This unfortunate discrimination however did not persist, and Pariahs (as the Adi-Dravida was then called) continued to be enlisted, though principally into the Sappers and Pioneers.

Lt.-Gen. Burton referring to the Madras Army in 1840 writes :—"The Army was fully officered and in a state of good discipline and efficiency. The men are not tall but there is no want of activity and strength in proportion to their size. They are mostly well-featured, but dark in complexion; they are always ready to work with spade and pickaxe, an excellent trait which the Bengal sepoys do not so commonly possess; they are good marchers, frugal feeders and possess in short many good qualities on active service. They have few caste prejudices and when properly led are fully as reliable as their more showy brethren of the other Presidencies." The words when "properly led" deserve special note.

Sir Neville Chamberlain published the following order on May 2nd, 1878: "The Commander-in-Chief intimates that recruits are not to be enlisted outside the Presidency. What the Coast Army did in times past, their successors if judiciously selected may be expected to do in the future. The sepoy of Bengal, Madras or Bombay is just what his British Officers make of him, and Sir Neville Chamberlain has now seen enough of this (Madras) Native Army to feel assured that the Presidency can produce plenty of good efficient soldiers provided they are sought for and when obtained be properly trained and well commanded." Emphasis may again be laid on the last two words.

Col. Wilson comparing the facility in recruiting at the time of the Bengal Mutiny when 17,000 men were enlisted, with the difficulties experienced between 1882 and 1887, attributes the cause partly to insecurity of permanence of service caused by frequent reductions between 1862 and 1882, during which period no less than 20 battalions were disbanded, but above all to the systematic way in which the Madras Army had for many years been kept in the background on most occasions of active service.

In the latter connection Lt.-Gen. Burton writing in 1888 may again be quoted: "If the Madras sepoy is now of less worth than he was in the days of our first struggles for empire in India, it is because of disuse of war and of enforced inactivity, to which the dominant policy of the Supreme Government has of late condemned him. The evil to an army which has become mortified and dispirited by neglect and contemptuous treatment is very serious, and no protest against such treatment can be too strong. It is on account of this ill-treatment that the Madras Army needs an advocate. Once let it have a fair share of active service and its turn in

the front line with the men of other presidencies, and it will perform its own advocacy in a sufficiently spirited manner."

The above extracts should be sufficient to dispel once and for all the idea that the Madras Army was largely recruited from Northern India. To confirm it the muster rolls of 36 Madras battalions taken at random between 1808 and 1829 show the following percentages among 32,318 sepoys :—

Bengal	1·65
Deccan	1·66
N. and Guntur Circars	28·32
Carnatic and Trichinopoly	35·43
Madura and Dindigul	7·78
Tanjore	7·45
Travancore and Tinnevelly	6·98
Malabar and Bombay	0·44
Mysore	9·40
Mahrattas	0·89
Total ...	100·00

The above figures call for little comment. The small numbers from Malabar are due, so Col. Wilks says, to the unwillingness of the Malayali of that day to leave his native place, a disability which he has long since overcome. The Mahrattas were no doubt the descendants of former invaders who had settled at Tanjore, Madura and Krishnagiri. The men from Bengal and Deccan can be accounted for by the fact that so many Madras battalions were during these years on service far to the North of the Presidency, and as already explained would naturally accept any suitable local recruits who offered, to replace casualties.

On the outbreak of War in 1914 all that remained of the Madras Army was the Corps of Q.V.O. Madras Sappers and Miners, three battalions of Madras Pioneers and eight

Infantry battalions, and it must be admitted that some of the last named were definitely not fit for field service. No Corps in the Indian Army has a higher reputation than the Madras Sappers, and the Madras Pioneers also were admittedly first class troops. Since the same class of man was enlisted for all three categories, it may be asked why the Carnatic battalions were not all up to the high standard of the others, and the answer is plain. Both Sappers and Pioneers had picked British Officers, they were kept to full establishment and as Corps troops were constantly employed on active service. The Carnatic battalions on the other hand were on a reduced establishment of 600 so that they could not possibly mobilise without very large drafts from linked battalions; they had not for many years been given any chance of service, and finally a number of their officers had been sent down from north-country regiments as undesirable or inefficient. Under such handicaps it is not surprising that some of the battalions were at the outbreak of war definitely below the standard required for active service, and the fact that when their turn came to go overseas with complete establishments and the necessary change of officers they acquitted themselves so well proves that any previous fault lay with the policy of relegating them to what were practically police duties, and with their officers, and most definitely not with the men themselves. It is often forgotten that recruits for the infantry came from exactly the same classes as those for the Sappers and Pioneers, and it is well that officers serving to-day with Madras units should remember that fact, and that it devolves upon themselves to make the most of the excellent material at their disposal.

The chief characteristics of the Madras sepoy have always been his undeviating loyalty, a remarkable power of

endurance, and devotion to his officers, but that devotion can only be won by those who deserve it. Of his courage, the chapter on war services gives ample testimony; few troops would stand unshaken the fire which inflicted 25 per cent casualties on Wellington's small force at Assaye, or on the Madras Brigades at Maheidpoor, and the Madrassis serving to-day are the direct descendants of those who participated in those actions and many other notable campaigns. No prouder records adorn any page of military history than those of the sepoys whom Clive, Coote and Wellesley led to victory, and one may be confident that their descendants to-day if given their fair chance of service and led by good officers will prove themselves worthy of the great traditions of the Old Coast Army.

CHAPTER V

Precis of Units

1st Madras Pioneers (Shaikh Mudin-ki-purani paltan)

Raised as 1st Battalion of Coast Sepoys 1758 (from independent Coys.)

Became 1st Carnatic Battalion 1769.
1st Madras Battalion 1784.
1/1st Madras Native Infantry 1796.
1st Madras Native Infantry 1824.
1st Madras Infantry (Pioneers) 1885.
61st P.W.O. Pioneers 1906.
61st K.G.O. Pioneers 1910.
1st Battalion Corps of Madras Pioneers 1929.
Disbanded 1933.

Crest—The Plume of the Prince of Wales,
Royal and Imperial Cypher.

2nd Madras Infantry (Mooto Naik)

Raised as 3rd Battalion Coast Sepoys 1759 (from independent Coys.)

Became 2nd Carnatic Battalion 1769.
1/2nd M.N.I. 1796.
2nd M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 62nd Punjabis 1903.

Crest—The Elephant—A Golden Dragon with the Imperial Crown.

3rd Palamcottah Light Infantry (Turing)

Raised as 4th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1759 (from independent Coys.)

Became 3rd Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/3rd M.N.I. 1796.
3rd Palamcottah L.I. 1824.
63rd P.L.I. 1903.
Disbanded 1922.

Motto—*Now or Never.*

4th Madras Pioneers (Baillie)

Raised as 5th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1759 (from independent Coys.)

Became 4th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/4th M.N.I. 1824.
4th M.I. (Pioneers) 1885.
64th Pioneers 1903.

2nd Battalion Corps of Madras Pioneers 1929.
Disbanded 1933.

Crest—The Elephant.

5th Madras Infantry (Shaik Khudawund)

Raised as 6th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1759 (from independent Coys.).

Became 5th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/5th M.N.I. 1796.
5th M.I. 1885.
65th Carnatic Lt. Infantry 1903.
Disbanded 1904, its place being taken in the Army by 2/6th Gurkha Rifles.

6th Madras Infantry (Mackenzie)

Raised as 7th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1761 at Trichinopoly.

Became 6th Carnatic Battalion 1769.
1/6th M.N.I. 1796.
6th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 66th Punjabis 1903.

Crest—A Golden Dragon with the Imperial Crown.

7th Madras Infantry (Cooke)

Raised as 8th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1761 at Trichinopoly.

Became 7th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/7th M.N.I. 1796.
7th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 67th Punjabis 1903.

8th Madras Infantry (Dunwoody)

Raised as 9th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1761.

Became 8th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/8th M.N.I. 1796.
8th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as Punjabis and disbanded 1902.

Crest—The Elephant.

9th Madras Infantry (Kelly)

Raised as 10th Battalion Coast Sepoys between 1762 and 1765 at Madura.

Became 9th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/9th M.N.I. 1796.
9th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 69th Punjabis 1903.

Crest—A Galley with the motto *By Land and Sea.*

10th Madras Infantry (Calvert)

Raised as 14th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1766 at Vellore.

Became 10th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
1/10th M.N.I. 1796.
10th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as a Burma Battalion (later 1/10th Gurkha Rifles) 1890.

Crest—The Elephant surmounted by the Rock Fort and *Amboor.*

The Colours are in the Vellore Fort Church over a tablet, which however incorrectly gives the Defence of Amboor as 1749 instead of 1767.

11th Madras Infantry (McLean)

Raised as 15th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1766 (from selected Nawab's Sepoys).

Became 11th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
2/9th M.N.I. 1796.
11th M.I. 1885.
71st Coorg Rifles 1903.
Disbanded 1904.

12th Madras Infantry (Barim)

Raised as 16th Battalion Coast Sepoys 1767 at Cuddalore.

Became 12th Carnatic Battalion 1770.
2/8th M.N.I. 1796.
12th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as a Burma Battalion (later 72nd Punjabis) 1890.

13th Madras Infantry (Alcock)

Raised as 13th Carnatic Battalion 1776 at Madras.

Became 2/3rd M.N.I. 1796.
13th M.I. 1885.
73rd C.I. 1903.
1/3rd Madras Regiment 1922.
Disbanded 1928.

Reformed as 1/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

14th Madras Infantry (Wahab)

Raised as 14th Carnatic Battalion 1776 at Vellore.

Became 2/6th M.N.I. 1796.
14th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 74th Punjabis 1903.

Crest—The Dragon with the motto *Ready and True.*

15th Madras Infantry (Davis)

Raised as 15th Carnatic Battalion 1776 at Tanjore.

Became 2/4th M.N.I. 1796.
15th M.I. 1885.
75th C.I. 1903.
2/3rd Madras Regiment 1922.
Disbanded 1926.

Re-formed as 2/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

16th Madras Infantry (Lane)

Raised as 16th Carnatic Battalion 1776 at Trichinopoly.

Became 2/5th M.N.I. 1796.
16th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 76th Punjabis 1903.

17th Madras Infantry (Butler)

Raised as 17th Carnatic Battalion 1777 at Fort St. George.

Became 2/1st M.N.I. 1796.
17th M.I. 1885.
77th Moplah Rifles 1903.
Disbanded 1907.

18th Madras Infantry (Bilcliffe)

Raised as 19th Carnatic Battalion 1777 at Cuddalore.

Became 2/10th M.N.I. 1796.
18th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1864.

19th Madras Infantry (Muirhead)

Raised as 20th Carnatic Battalion 1777 at Trichinopoly.

Became 2/7th M.N.I. 1796.
19th M.I. 1885.
79th C.I. 1903.
3/3rd Madras Regiment 1922.
Disbanded 1923.
Re-formed as 3/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

20th Madras Infantry (Bagot)

Raised as 21st Carnatic Battalion 1777 at Tanjore.

Became 2/2nd M.N.I. 1796.
20th M.I. 1885.
80th C.I. 1903.
Disbanded 1921.

Carried as an Honorary Colour the cavalry standard captured from Haidar Ali's troops at the battle of Sholinghur 1781.

Crest—Three Colours crossed.

21st Madras Infantry (Roberts)

Raised as 28th Madras Battalion 1786 at Chicacole.

Became 1/11th M.N.I. 1796.
21st M.I. 1885.
81st Pioneers 1903.
10th Battalion Corps of Madras Pioneers 1929.
Disbanded 1933.

22nd Madras Infantry (Dalrymple)

Raised as 29th Madras Battalion 1788 at Ellore.

Became 2/11th M.N.I. 1796.
22nd M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 82nd Punjabis 1903.

23rd Wallajahbad Light Infantry (Tolfrey)

Raised as 33rd Madras Battalion 1794 at Madras.

Became 1/12th M.N.I. 1797.
23rd W.L.I. 1824.
83rd W.L.I. 1903.
4/3rd Madras Regiment (W.L.I.) 1922.
Disbanded 1923.

Re-formed as 4/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

Motto—*Now or Never.*

24th Madras Infantry (Macdonald)

Raised as 34th Madras Battalion 1794 at Vellore.

Became 2/12th M.N.I. 1797.
24th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 84th Punjabis 1903.

Crest—The Elephant.

25th Madras Infantry (Kenny)

Raised as 35th Madras Battalion 1794 at Trichinopoly.

Became 1/13th M.N.I. 1797.
25th M.I. 1885.
78th Moplah Rifles 1903.
Disbanded 1907.

26th Madras Infantry (Innes)

Raised as 36th Madras Battalion 1794 at Tanjore.

Became 2/13th M.N.I. 1798.
26th M.I. 1885.
86th C.I. 1903.
10/3rd Madras Regiment 1922.
Disbanded 1926.

Re-formed as Training Centre 3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

27th Madras Infantry (Lindsay)

Raised as 1st Extra Battalion M.N.I. 1798 at Trichinopoly.

Became 1/14th M.N.I. 1798.
27th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as 87th Punjabis 1903.

28th Madras Infantry (Martin)

Raised as 2nd Extra Battalion 1798 at Vellore.

Became 2/14th M.N.I. 1798.
28th M.I. 1885.
88th C.I. 1903.
Disbanded 1921.

29th Madras Infantry (Macleod)

Raised as 3rd Extra Battalion 1798 at Masulipatam.

Became 1/15th M.N.I. 1800.
29th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as Burma Battalion (later 89th Punjabis) 1893.

30th Madras Infantry (Crewe)

Raised as Masulipatam Battalion (from Raymond's French Brigade) 1799.

Became 2/15th M.N.I. 1800.

30th M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as a Burma Battalion (later 90th Punjabis) 1892.

31st Trichinopoly Light Infantry (Jennerett)

Raised as 1/16th M.N.I. 1800 at Trichinopoly.

Became 31st T.L.I. 1824.

Reconstituted as a Burma Battalion (later 91st Punjabis L.I.) 1892.

Motto—*Now or Never.*

32nd Madras Infantry (Dyce)

Raised as 2/16th M.N.I. 1800 at Madura.

Became 32nd M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as a Burma Battalion (later 92nd Punjabis) 1890.

33rd Madras Infantry (Wahab)

Raised as 1/17th M.N.I. 1800 at Guntur.

Became 33rd M.I. 1885.

Reconstituted as a Burma Battalion (later 93rd Burma Infantry) 1890.

34th Chicacole Light Infantry (Durand)

Raised as 2/17th M.N.I. 1800 at Chicacole.

Became 34th C.L.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

Motto—*Now or Never.*

35th Madras Native Infantry (Parkison)

Raised as 1/18th M.N.I. 1800 at Bangalore.

Became 35th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

36th Madras Native Infantry (Nundy)

Raised as 2/18th M.N.I. 1800 at Nundydrug.

Became 36th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

Crest—A Golden Dragon with the Imperial Crown.

37th Madras Grenadiers (Forbes)

Raised as 1/19th M.N.I. 1800 at Ichapur.

Became 37th M.N.I. 1824.
37th Madras Grenadiers 1841.
Disbanded 1882.

Crest—A Golden Dragon with the Imperial Crown.

38th Madras Native Infantry (Macgregor)

Raised as 2/19th M.N.I. 1800 at Ellore.

Became 38th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

39th Madras Native Infantry (Martin)

Raised as 1st Extra Battalion 1803 at Trichinopoly.

Became 1/20th M.N.I. 1804.
39th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

40th Madras Native Infantry (Volunteer)

Raised as Madras Volunteer Battalion for service in the Moluccas 1801.

Became 2/20th M.N.I. 1804.
40th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

41st Madras Native Infantry (Crane)

Raised as 2nd Extra Battalion 1803 at Chicacole.

Became 1/21st M.N.I. 1804.
41st M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1882.

Crest—A Golden Dragon with the Imperial Crown.

42nd Madras Native Infantry (Macfarlane)

Raised as 4th Extra Battalion 1803 at Ellore.

Became 2/21st M.N.I. 1804.
42nd M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1864.

43rd Madras Native Infantry (Whitlie)

Raised as 3rd Extra Battalion 1803 at Nellore.

Became 1/22nd M.N.I. 1804.
43rd M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1864.

44th Madras Native Infantry (Buchan)

Raised as 6th Extra Battalion 1803 at Trichinopoly.

Became 2/22nd M.N.I. 1804.
44th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1864.

45th Madras Native Infantry (Shaw)

Raised as 5th Extra Battalion 1803 at Walajabad.

Became 1/23rd M.N.I. 1804.
45th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1864.

46th Madras Native Infantry (Farrar)

Raised as 7th Extra Battalion 1803 at Sankarankoil.

Became 2/23rd M.N.I. 1804.
46th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1864.

47th Madras Native Infantry (Chitty)

Raised as 1/24th M.N.I. 1819 at Ellore.

Became 47th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1862.

48th Madras Native Infantry (Waugh)

Raised as 2/24th M.N.I. 1819 at Walajabad.

Became 48th M.N.I. 1824.
Disbanded 1862.

49th Madras Native Infantry (Nundy)

Raised as 1/25th M.N.I. 1819 at Nundydrug.

Became 49th M.N.I. 1824.

Disbanded 1862.

50th Madras Native Infantry (Fenwick)

Raised as 2/25th M.N.I. 1819 at Palamcottah.

Became 50th M.N.I. 1824.

Disbanded 1862.

51st Madras Native Infantry (Leighton)

Raised as 1st Extra Regiment 1826 at Palamcottah.

Became 51st M.N.I. 1826.

Disbanded 1862.

52nd Madras Native Infantry (Stewart)

Raised as 2nd Extra Regiment 1826 at Bangalore.

Became 52nd M.N.I. 1826.

Disbanded 1862.

Madras Rifles (Munro)

Raised as Madras Volunteer Battalion 1810.

Became Madras Rifle Corps 1814.

Disbanded 1830, the Companies then being attached to Regiments on the permanent establishment. These Rifle Coys., which continued to wear Rifle uniform, were abolished in 1869.

Temporary Battalions formed during the Last War.

2/61st	Pioneers—Raised	1918.	Disbanded	1921.
2/63rd	P.L.I.	,,	1918.	,,	1919.
2/73rd	M.I.	,,	1918.	,,	1921.
2/75th	C.I.	,,	1918.	,,	1920.
2/80th	C.I.	,,	1918.	,,	1921.
2/81st	Pioneers	,,	1917.	,,	1921.
2/88th	C.I.	,,	1918.	,,	1920.
1/156th	Infantry	,,	1918.	,,	1919.

Territorial Battalions

11th Madras Battalion

Raised as 1st (Territorial) Battalion 73rd C.I. 1921.

Became 11/3rd Madras Regiment 1922.
11th Bn. Madras Pioneers 1928.
11th (Madras) Battalion 1933.
1/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

12th Malabar Battalion

Raised as 1st (Malabar) Territorial Bn. 75th C.I. 1921.

Became 12th (Malabar) Bn. 3rd Madras Regt. 1922.
12th (Malabar) Bn. 1st Madras Pioneers 1928.
12th Malabar Bn. 1929.
2/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

13th Malabar Battalion

Raised as 1st (Territorial) Bn. 79th C.I. 1922.

Became 13th (Malabar) Bn. 3rd Madras Regt. 1922.
13th (Malabar) Bn. 1st Madras Pioneers 1928.
13th Malabar Bn. 1929.
3/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

14th Coorg Battalion

Raised as 1st (Territorial) Bn. 83rd W.L.I. 1922.

Became 14/3rd Madras Regiment 1922.
14th Bn. 1st Madras Pioneers 1928.
14th Coorg Bn. 1929.
1st Coorg Battalion 1942.

15th (Madras) Battalion

Raised 1939.

Became 4/3rd Madras Regiment 1942.

CHAPTER VI

HONOURS AND AWARDS

The following is a composite list of the Battle Honours awarded to Madras Infantry and Pioneer Regiments :—

Amboor (1767)
Carnatic (1780–84)
Sholinghur (1781)
Mysore (1790–92)
Seringapatam (1799)
Assaye (1803)
Cochin (1809)
Bourbon (1810)
Seetabuldee (1817)
Nagpore (1817)
Maheidpoor (1817)
Kemmendine (1824)
Ava (1824–26)
China (1840–42)
Pegu (1852)
Lucknow (1857–58)
Central India (1858–59)
China (1857–60)
Afghanistan (1878–80)
Burma (1885–87)
Tirah-Punjab Frontier (1897–98)
China (1900)
Afghanistan (1919)

The Great War—Kut Al Amara 1917—Baghdad—Mesopotamia 1916–18 — Persia 1918 — Aden — North-West Frontier India 1915—Baluchistan 1918 Kilimanjaro—East Africa 1914–18.

As already stated, the 20th M.I. were permitted to carry as an Honorary Colour the cavalry standard captured at Sholinghur in 1781.

Honorary Colours were also given to the Madras units engaged at Assaye in commemoration of that victory.

Special awards to individuals were from time to time made by the Company. The earliest which can be traced is the grant of a gold chain and medal to Mir Mansoor, a Subadar of sepoys on November 5, 1753, for "having on many occasions behaved with remarkable bravery and received many desperate wounds."

A gold medal was also bestowed on Yusuf Khan (the Nellore Subadar) by order of Council on March 27, 1755, "as a distinguishing mark and reward of his bravery and good service." This officer had previously been in the French Service during the siege of Madras in 1746.

On April 24, 1786, the following paragraph of a letter from the Court of Directors with the Resolution of Government thereon, was published in General Orders :—

"We further direct that you consider of some proper mark of distinction to be given to such of the sepoys as resisted the many endeavours used to seduce them from the British service, as a reward for their firmness, fidelity and attachment, and as an encouragement to others to follow so laudable an example."

Resolution of Government

"Agreed that a medal with the inscription of the word ***Fidelity*** be given to the natives above described as a mark of the attention and opinion of Government in their favour.

The medals to the commissioned officers to be of gold, those to the non-commissioned and privates to be silver."

It would appear however that these medals for fidelity in 1780–84 were never issued, probably on account of the very large numbers involved.

An instance of fidelity on the part of a distinguished Indian Officer who died in prison rather than accept service under Tipu is too remarkable to be passed over in silence. Syed Ibrahim, Commandant of the Tanjore cavalry, was made a prisoner in 1781. Repeated attempts to induce him to enter Tipu's service, though backed up by the most brilliant promises, all failed to shake his fidelity, and finally he died in 1784 in the notorious fort of Kabaldrug from the hardships of a rigorous confinement and unwholesome food, which had been intended to produce that acquiescence which the Sultan's promises had failed to procure.

Government Order Fort St. George, dated May 26th, 1800 continues :—

" In order to manifest his respect for the long services, the exemplary zeal and impregnable fidelity of Syed Ibrahim, the Governor in Council is pleased to order and direct that the amount of his pay as Commandant of cavalry, being fifty-two pagodas and twenty-one fanams per month shall be conferred as a pension for life on his sister who left her home in the Carnatic to share his misfortunes in captivity and who was subsequently wounded in the storm of Seringapatam." Government also had a tomb erected to his memory at Chennapatna with a suitable endowment for its upkeep. This tomb, which continues to be maintained by the Madras Government, is a conspicuous object on the main Bangalore-Mysore road north of Chennapatna. Unfortunately it bears

the misleading inscription that it was erected to the memory of Syed Ibrahim, Commandant of Bangalore, who showed kindness to the British prisoners during the 2nd Mysore war. It is a recorded fact that one Syed Mahomed, who was Tipu's Commandant at Bangalore, showed kindness to British prisoners at that place between 1780 and 1784, and that the officers who benefited by his kindly attentions after their release collected subscriptions on his behalf. How this officer came to be confused with the E.I. Coy's faithful cavalry commandant is not known. There is however no possible doubt that that the notice referred to is incorrect and that the tomb was raised to the memory of the Tanjore Commandant Syed Ibrahim of the British service and not to any officer of Tipu's.

During the last world war and subsequent operations two Military Crosses were won by Madras V.C.Os., one by an officer of the Q.V.O. Madras Sappers and Miners and the other by Subadar Devaraju 80th Carnatic Infantry. The citation to the latter records that it was given: "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty on May 7th, 1920, near Abu Kemal, when in charge of three small picquets. He was heavily attacked by vastly superior numbers but maintained his position the whole day. His coolness and skilful leading were above all praise and his determined resistance saved much Government property from being looted."

Between 1914 and 1924 the following awards were made of the Indian Distinguished Service Medal:—

61st K.G.O. Pioneers—Eleven.
2/61st Pioneers—Two.
64th Pioneers—Twelve.
73rd C.I.—One.
75th C.I.—Seven.
79th C.I.—One.
80th C.I.—Nine.
81st Pioneers—Three.
86th C.I.—Two.

EPILOGUE

The Madras Officer who has read so far may logically ask how best he can win that devotion of his men which has always been such an outstanding characteristic of the Madras sepoy.

The question is of course one of psychology. The officer who is constantly nagging at his men will have even less success with Madrassis than with any other class of soldiers. On the other hand one of sympathetic temperament who shows not only by words but by deeds that he is really interested in his men and that he will not permit any disparaging remarks to be made about them will certainly win their affection and regard.

For the rest, a close personal association with them, not always through Viceroy's Commissioned Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, and learning their names, coupled with a real personal interest in their own well-being and in their family affairs, will quickly bring about the desired result.

The point is admirably expressed in the Recruiting Manual: "Madrassis, while on the one hand alive to injury and prone to resent ill-treatment whether fancied or real, are when kindly used the

most faithful and attached of all soldiers," and the implications of this extract deserve the closest attention.

One of our main difficulties in the South is the lack of an outstanding Madrassi military personality such as Shivaji of our neighbours the Mahrattas, Akbar of the Mohammedans, or Ranjit Singh of the Sikhs. But we do have the glorious records and traditions of the old Coast Army, of which any race or class can be proud. These I have attempted to bring out, however inadequately, in this necessarily short brochure.

Provided they are studied by the officers and inculcated into the rank and file, this record should inspire the men with a proper pride in themselves and in their great heritage.

The record too of those other Madras units which already have had the good fortune to see service in this war, proves that the Madrassi has nothing to fear in comparison with any other class of soldier in India.

Many Madrassis have already won distinction and decorations in the past four years. The opportunity so long awaited by the Madras Infantry is now with us. Let us all work together to exploit it to the full.